THIKRULLAH IN THE MIRROR OF THE SUNNAH

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Preface

All praise is due only to Allaah. We laud Him and beseech His aid and beg forgiveness only from Him and believe in Him and rely solely on Him. We seek salvation in Him from the evils of our inner selves and the vices of our actions. There is none to misguide one whom Allaah intends to guide. I bear witness that there is no one worthy of worship but Allaah, the One who has no partner. I also testify that Hadhrat Muhammad ρ is the faithful servant and the Last Rasul of Allaah. May Allaah Ta'ala's mercy be on him, his family and his Sahabaah τ and may He bless them and raise their status.

The book"Thikrullaah in the mirror of the Sunnah" by Mujlisul Ulama of South Africa extends across 368 pages.

We have summarised it. A few points that we have penned :-

1.) Most authors who try to prove the validity of "congregational loud Zikr in unison in the Masjid" totally miss the point and mislead the simple masses;
2.) They labouriously dwell on the virtues, status and importance of Zikr whereas that is not the bone of contention;
3.) They lead academic discussions try to forcefully prove that loud zikr is better than soft zikr, again this is not the issue on hand;
4.) Aayats and Ahadeeth are given wrong interpretations;
5.) The statements of 'recent' scholars are given preference to 'later' scholars;
6.) The practices of the Khanqah are superceded over the Shariah;

7.) The views of the Sufiya are given superioriety over the Fuqaha;
8.) There is not a single event wherein Sahaabah gathered for collective loud zikr;
9.) The zikr method of Sahaabah are criterion not Sufiya who came centuries later;
10.) The Ibaadat practices of Sahaabah are criterion not that of mountains and birds;
11.) Proofs cannot be forcefully extracted from general meaning and unrelated scope in the Quraan and Ahaadith;
12.) The 'tasbih' of Hadhrat Yunus (alayhis salaam) was a dua and he was 'alone'. How can collective zikr be proven from within the fish;
13.) It is not proven anywhere that Hadhrat Musa (alayhis salaam) would sit in halqah in an area and engage in loud collective zikr;
14.) No one has the right to impose on others ones personal understanding and interpretation, giving it the status of Ibaadat or Wujoob. Can you imagine what will be the shape of Shariat;
15.) There is no explicit proofs to substantiate collective loud zikr;
16.) Exceptions are not principles. Primary principles are bases for law formulations not exception;
17.) There is Ijma (consensus) of the Ulema that silent ikr is better and loud zikr is bid'at except in special cases – Tafseer Mazhari. Now there is a trust to prove the opposite;
18.) Loud zikr is makrooh. Silect verbal zikr is highly meritorious. Zikr from the inner heart is highest.
19.) Any statement which goes against the Nusoos or Sunnat will be discarded or suitably interpreted to reconciles with the mainstream ijma;
20.) In it (Shari practices such as Athaan)

The contention of the other party thus remains unassailed, vindicated and fully condoned by the Shariah.

THE BASIS FOR THE AHKAAM OF THE SHARIAH

The dispute with the votaries of the unsubstantiated specific forms of Thikr is in this area. The dispute does not centre around *Mutlaq Thikr* (Thikr in general) nor to any Masnoon acts of Thikr, whether *Sirri* (silent) or *Jahri* (audible). There is no dispute on this issue. The argument pertains to the specific forms (*hait-e-kathaiyyah)* for which the honourable Mufti Radhaaul Haq Sahib has not presented even one Hadith in substantiation as shall be seen as we progress in this discussion.

Now the dispute pertains to these queer acts of Thikr which have no basis in the Sunnah. The dispute has no relationship with *Mutlaq Thikr* although the venerable Mufti Sahib's booklet endeavours to create the idea that those who are opposing the bid'ah programmes are anti-Thikr. Therefore, the venerable Mufti Sahib's booklet of Thikr is misdirected and discusses a subject entirely different and apart from what the other party is contending.
The Mufti Saheb has laboured in vain to structure from the Qur'aan and Sunnah a basis for the innovation of the specific forms of congregational Thikr. **Neither the Qur'aanic verses nor the Hadith narrations which he has presented constitute a basis for the specific forms of Thikr.** The Aayaat and the Ahaadith which the Mufti Sahib has presented have no relevance to the current forms of congregational, loud Thikr programmes conducted in some Musaajid.

WHAT IS BID'AH?

Hadhrat Ali (radhiyallahu anhu) saw considerable wrong in the *specific form* of Nafl Salaat which the man had contemplated, hence he averred the probability of Allah's punishment for performing that specific Salaat.

Commenting on the evil of *bid'ah,* Imaam Ghazaali (rahmatullah alayh) said: "If you do an act (of ibaadat) without the command of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and without following him (in an act), then you have committed a sinful act even if such act is in the form of ibaadat." *(Extract from Fataawa Rahimiyyah)*

There is considerable emphasis in the Ahaadith on observance of originality in ibaadat practices. Diversion from the original ibaadat practices is not condoned in the Shariah. New forms of Thikr eventually develop into hardcore bid'ah which distorts and displaces the Sunnah. The original Sunnah is lost in the labyrinth of innovations irrespective of the sincerity with which the unsubstantiated 'ibaadat' practices were introduced and regardless of the imagined or perceived benefits.

MUFTI RADHAAUL HAQ'S ARGUMENTS

(1) Thikr – Just any Form?

While the importance of Thikr cannot be overstated or exaggerated, it is incorrect to claim that "zikr, no matter what form it may be', is desirable and commanded by the Shariah.

The Fuqaha have evolved the principle: *When a Mustahab is assigned a higher status, it becomes Makrooh.*

"It is Mustahab to begin from the right side in good acts. However, when Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu

anhu) observed during his time that this was developing into a Waajib act, he decreed it to be Makrooh. Ibnul Muneer said in this regard: 'Verily Mandoob acts sometimes become Makrooh when it (Mustahab/Mandoob) is elevated above its status. (Beginning from the) right is Mustahab in all acts of ibaadat. But when Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) feared that people will believe it to be compulsory, then he indicated its *Karaahat*. And Allah knows best." *(Fathul Baari Sharh Bukhaari)*

Imaam Ghazaali (rahmatullah alayh) said: "When a Sunnat becomes a salient (distinguishing) feature of the Ahl-e-Bid'ah, then we order its abandonment for fear of resembling them." (Ihyaaul Uloom)

The Musaajid in South Africa are not private *khaanqahs.* Even in *khaanqahs* where adherence to the Sunnah dominates, there are rules and regulations governing the *Mubah* Thikr forms introduced as spiritual remedies.

(2) The Qur'aan and Thikr

The honourable Mufti Sahib enumerates 15 Qur'aanic verses to highlight the status of Thikr. However, not a single one of these verses remotely deals with the topic which the Mufti Sahib has undertaken to espouse, namely *loud and collective Thikr in the Musjid.* The Aayaat refer to *Mutlaq Thikr* – Thikr in general which is the objective of man's sojourn on earth. While the dispute pertains to the *special forms of non-Sunnah Thikr rituals,* the Qur'aanic verses exhort Thikr in general or to make Thikr in the manner in which Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and his Sahaabah used to make Thikr.

(3) The Hadith and Thikr

In his discussion pertaining to the virtues of Thikr in the light of the Ahaadith, Mufti Radhaaul Haq Sahib has enumerated 20 Hadith narrations which all mention *Mutlaq Thikr*, not the new *specific forms* which are being propagated nowadays. None of the Ahaadith substantiates the case of the participants in collective loud Thikr in public places (the Musaajid), nor does any of these narrations refute the contention of those who criticize the innovated forms of Thikr.

The virtues of Thikr in general are extolled in the Ahaadith cited by the Mufti Sahib. But the dispute is on another turf. The virtues, excellence and imperative need of perpetual Thikr (24 hours of the day and night) are not being contested. The refutation is directed at the *specific forms* of non-Sunnah practices which are developing into hardcore *bid'ah*.

(4) The Status of Collective Thikr

What is the proof to substantiate the first premises cited by the Mufti Sahib? Besides this being his personal opinion, there is no evidence to back up this spurious opinion.

The validity of a gathering/congregation is not reliant on all members of the gathering raising their voices in chorus and chanting in unision. This is a fallacious idea posited as a requisite for the validity of a gathering. There is no basis for this contention of the Mufti Sahib.

There is no explicit instruction in the Ahaadith ordering collectivism of the kind advocated by the venerable Mufti Sahib.

The conclusion: *"Hence this Hadith indicates towards audible zikr',* is highly erroneous. The very first beings who qualified for the awards and rewards mentioned in these Ahaadith in which appear the term 'gathering', are the Sahaabah. Despite the Sahaabah being the first recipients of these rewards, the honourable Mufti Sahib managed to only venture *"this Hadith indicates"*. He has not presented the *amal* of the Sahaabah. He has not cited a single episode of the Sahaabah having gathered to execute a programme of loud collective Thikr.

The clinching argument for dismissing the baseless opinion of the Mufti Sahib is his inability to present the practice of the Sahaabah to corroborate his inference, namely, *"this Hadith indicates towards audible Thikr"*. There is no need for 'indications' on such an important and vital issue as Masnoon Ibaadat. How did the Sahaabah perform their acts of Thikr in their 'gatherings'? Was loud and collective Thikr in chorus the practice of the Sahaabah? Were they not concerned with the tranquillity, peace, etc. which the Hadith promises for those who engage in Thikr in gatherings? Were the Sahaabah deprived of the benefits and blessings mentioned in these Ahaadith wherein appears the aspect of 'Thikr in gatherings'? From the innumerable thousands of Ahaadith is it not possible to present a few explicit narrations which explain with clarity the *amal* of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the Sahaabah in their gatherings of Thikr? Why should we rely on the inferences of the venerable Mufti Sahib when we have the perfect and excellent Example of Nabi-e-Kareem (sallallhu alayhi wasallam) and his Ashaab in front of us? Why have the Fuqaha elaborated with clarity the numerous acts of ibaadat, but do not make even the slightest mention of collective loud Thikr. Their silence is not puzzling. Collective loud Thikr simply did not constitute part of the ibaadat of Rasulullah

(sallallahu alayhi wasallam), the Sahaabah, the Taabieen and Tab-e-Taabieen.

The Sahaabah were the embodiments of the Ahaadith. Every command issued by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was given practical expression by the Sahaabah. Thus for the correct tafseer of the Ahaadith, it is imperative to view the Hadith narrations in the mirror of the Sahaabahs' *amal.*

It is incorrect to relegate the practice of the Sahaabah into oblivion, then isolate the Ahaadith and mutilate it with a personal opinion which is unsubstantiated by the Sunnah. Thus, to say: *"This Hadith indicates towards audible zikr",* and *"This proves the permissibility of collective zikr"*, *"Silent zikr has no relation with a gathering",* is untenable and is not borne out by the practical expression which the Sahaabah gave to these Ahaadith on which the venerable Mufti Sahib seeks to structure his case for loud, collective Thikr. Since it is known for a fact that the Sahaabah did not indulge in these *specific forms* of loud and congregational Thikr which are today in vogue and which are fast assuming the form of *Bid'ah,* the suggestion that these Ahaadith even 'indicate' towards these innovated forms of Thikr is preposterously erroneous.

The kutub of Hadith and Fiqah elaborately discuss the *Athkaar* of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the Sahaabah and the methods of recitation of these *Athkaar* on all occasions, including the Musjid. Nowhere will these *specific forms of collective loud Thikr* be found in these kutub. It is therefore futile, to put it mildly, to even attempt to acquire from the Ahaadith a basis for these new practices.

If these *specific forms* which are the subject of dispute, had any Sunnah validity or substantiation, there would have existed an

unbroken chain of *Ta-aamul* (continuous, uninterrupted practice) extending to the Sahaabah. The kutub of the Muhadditheen and the Fuqaha would have explained its significance, virtues, benefits and methods of practical expression. We all would have been practising collective Thikr in the Musaajid. However, there is nothing but complete silence, and even rejection.

In the tafseer of this Hadith, the following appears in Mirkaat: *"Thus, his standing for taa-ah (obedience/ibaadat of Allah) such as Tawaaf, ziyaarat, Janaazah Salaat, seeking knowledge and listening to naseehat do not negate it (i.e. the purport stated in the Hadith)."* The Mufti Sahib's averment, *'Silent zikr outwardly has no relation with a gathering',* is utterly fallacious. It excludes the numerous kinds of thaakireen from the barakaat mentioned in this particular Hadith.

But there is no authority of the Shariah who has presented such a narrow opinion as the view of the Mufti Sahib. Furthermore, there is no backing anywhere in the Shariah for the inference that this Hadith pertains to a group of persons who have gathered for a *specific form of loud and collective Thikr.*

There is no substantiation in the Ahaadith for these *specific forms of loud collective Thikr.*

The Mufti Sahib will have to argue permissibility from another angle and base his case on Shar'i principles. If he manages to structure a case for a *Mubah* hukm, then it will devolve on the other party to show grounds for the claim that this specific mubah practice has degenerated into *Bid'ah Sayyiah.* This is the narrow arena into which these *specific forms of collective and loud Thikr* programs fit.

(5) Loud Thikr Based on Deduction

There is no need to deduct from any Hadith permissibility for audible Thikr. There is a difference between audible and loud Thikr which borders on screaming and shouting. The latter form of 'loud' Thikr is not permissible. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) explicitly prohibited the screaming type of loud Thikr which has become a salient attribute of the participants of *halqah Thikr* which constrains the walls of echo.

The bone of contention is that the *specific forms of collective loud Thikr* which are nowadays being practised in the Musaajid have degenerated into bid'ah, hence are not permissible. Insha'Allah, this aspect will be discussed in greater detail in the ensuing pages.

(6) Silent Thikr

Mufti Radhaaul Haq Sahib, includes in his booklet a section which he captioned: *'Silent Zikr of the Heart and Tongue in the Light of the Ahaadeeth'***.** There appears to be no relationship between this caption and the objective of his booklet which is supposed to substantiate *loud collective Thikr in the Musaajid.* Since he has introduced this topic of silent Thikr, it will be appropriate to comment on the Ahaadith which he has presented to show the virtues of silent Thikr.

(8) The Benefits of Thikr

Then the honourable Mufti Sahib presents 13 pages in which he has enumerated the benefits of Thikr. In the context of the subject matter, this presentation is superfluous since it has no relevance to the dispute. No one denies the benefits of Thikr.

The target of criticism is the *specific form of loud collective Thikr* which has degenerated into *Bid'ah.*

(9) "Loud and Collective Zikr of the Ambiyaa (Alayhimus salaam)"

The discussion here concerns human beings engaging in loud and collective Thikr which is unsubstantiated in the Sunnah. Citing the mountains and the birds as a *'daleel'* is a ludicrous attempt.

Such far-fetched inferences and deduction are a futile attempt which do not constitute a basis for matters pertaining to the *Ahkaam* of the Shariah. This type of deduction is not proof of the Shariah. The Thikr methods of the Sahaabah should be presented in support of one's claim, not a method introduced by the Sufiya centuries after the Sahaabah. Here it suffices to say that their methods do not constitute Shar'i evidence for a practice which has been introduced as 'ibaadat' whilst in fact it was unknown to the Sahaabah.

But, the Mu'jizah of Hadhrat Dawood (alayhis salaam) is not a *daleel* for a practice which we say has degenerated into bid'ah – for a practice which has no origin in the Sunnah. The ibaadat practices of the Sahaabah are the criterion, not the practice of the mountains and the birds. Furthermore, neither did Nabi Dawood (alayhis salaam) not the mountains and the birds perform to a public gallery of human beings. Hadhrat Dawood (alayhis salaam) was engaging in Thikr in the wilderness, far from the crowds while the Mufti Sahib is promoting Thikr programmes for the public gallery.

Proof for acts of ibaadat should be acquired from the specific practices of the Sahabah and Taabieen, not by inferences and

deduction from Qur'aanic Aayaat and Ahaadith which have general scope and unrelated meanings.

(ii) The Mufti Sahib mentions what he terms *"The Loud Zikr and Collective Zikr of Hazrat Yunus (Alaihis salaam)"* Presenting his *daleel* for loud and collective Thikr, the Mufti Sahib avers: *"Allah Ta'ala says in the Noble Qur'an: 'When the person of the fish (i.e. Hazrat Yunus – Alaihis salaam) left his nation in anger and thought that We would not straighten things for him, he called out to his Lord in the darkness: 'O my Sustainer, there is no deity but You. I am surely amongst the wrongdoers."*

Several aspects of this commentary requires rebuttal.
* Nowhere in the aayat does there appear even a hint of 'collective' Thikr. Yunus (alayhis salaam) **was alone** in the belly of the fish. He was in an abnormal situation. Even if he had called out loudly from within the belly of the fish, it does not constitute a basis for the collective loud Thikr conducted in the Musjid. While the Qur'aan unambiguously mentions the mountains and the birds making Thikr with Hadhrat Dawood (alayhis salaam), there is not the remotest suggestion in this aayat that the fishes or even just the one fish which had swallowed Hadhrat Yunus (alayhis salaam) had joined him in the Tasbeeh which he was reciting as a dua. And even if we assume that the fishes had joined him in Thikr, it is never a basis for the bid'ah type of collective loud Thikr performances in the Musaajid. The venerable Mufti Sahib's allegation that this aayat is *daleel* for the imagined 'collective zikr' of Hadhrat Yunus (alayhis salaam) is utterly fallacious.

Yunus (alayhis salaam) **was alone** in the stomach of the fish and he was alone making Thikr/dua. If it should be baselessly imagined that the fish which had swallowed him or the fishes

of the ocean had also joined him in Thikr, then too, such an imaginary figment will not be proof for a practice elevated to the status of ibaadat. Proof of ibaadat is the Qur'aan and the Sunnah – not such weird deductions and inferences, but explicit and specific references such as the narrations pertaining to the precise method of performing Salaat, making Dua, reciting Tasbeehaat, etc. Performance of Salaat and making Masnoon Dua in the way the Ummah is doing have not been structured on the basis of inferences and deductions from ambiguities.

* There is no dispute in this regard. If indeed the Thikr/dua of Hadhrat Yunus (alayhis salaam) inside the belly of the fish was audible, it would be justification for an individual making dua/Thikr audibly, alone in privacy, not in public to attract the gazes of people.

* While the word, *'nidaa'* does generally mean audible and loud, *sirr/khafy (inaudible and silence)* are not excluded from its meaning, especially in the context of Dua. Describing the Dua of Hadhrat Zakariyya (alayhis salaam), the Qur'aan Majeed states:

"When he (Zakariyya – alayhis salaam) called (naadaa) his Rabb a ***silent call*** *(nidaa-an khafiyyan)."* In this aayat the word *'nidaa'* is qualified with the term *khafiyyan* (i.e. the *nidaa* was made silently and in solitude. Commenting on the word *nidaa* appearing in this aayat, Tafseerul Mazhari explains: *"Nidaa-an khafiyyan, i.e silently. in the middle of the night because, verily, silent Thikr and dua have greater ikhlaas (sincerity), and Ikhfaa' (silent dua) is the Sunnat (method) of Dua."*

Tafseer Ruhul Bayaan commenting on the terms *nidaa-an khafiyyan,* states: *"Zakariyya (alayhis salaam) observed beautiful etiquette in his Dua. Despite it (silent dua) being like*

audible dua in relation to Allah Ta'ala, it (silent dua – nidaa-an khafiyyan) is closest to Ikhlaas (sincerity) and furthest from riya (show). This Faqeer (i.e. the author of Ruhul Bayaan) says: Although the word 'nidaa' is in the meaning of (raising) the voice, nevertheless the voice is sometimes qualified with weakness, and it is then described as 'sautun khafiyyun' (silent voice), i.e. whispering. Similarly is nidaa'. It has been authentically reported from the Fuqaha that some low tones are regarded to be the minimum stage of jahr (audibility). By researching (this subject) another meaning has become apparent, namely, an-nidaaul khafi (i.e. a silent/hidden call) according to the elite (khawaas – the Auliya), such as Thikr-e-Khafi is hidden from even the guarding angels, leave alone people…."

Ma-aariful Qur'aan explaining *nidaa-an khafiyyan,* states: *"From this it is known that to make dua silently is afdhal (best/most meritorious). Hadhrat Sa'd bin Abi Waqqaas (radhiyallahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: 'Verily, the best Thikr is silent (Thikr)."*

Elucidating further on the meaning of *nidaa,* Tafseer Ruhul Ma-aani states: *"Concealed from people. No one from among them heard him. Zakariyya (alayhis salaam) made his dua silently because it was more conducive for Ikhlaas (sincerity) and furthest from riya (show and ostentation)…..On the basis of our explanation there is no conflict between* ***nidaa and it being silent****. In fact there is no conflict even when nidaa is defined with raising of the voice (raf'us saut)………And there is no conflict based on a figurative interpretation (of the term nidaa), or based on the view that* ***raf'us saut (raising the voice) is not a requisite for nidaa."***

Thus, the *'nidaa'* argument presented by the Mufti Sahib is devoid of substance in the context of the aayat as well as in the context of our discussion.

Commenting on *nidaa-an khafiyyan,* Tafseer Ibn Katheer states: *"Verily, Allah is aware of the pious heart, and He hears the silent voice (as-sautul khafi)."*

Al-Jaami li-Ahkaamil Qur'aan of Qurtubi explaining the terms, *nidaa-an khafiyyan'*, says: *"This is like Allah's statement: 'Call unto your Rabb with humility and silently, Verily, He does not love those who transgress the limits." – A'raaf. …. It has already been explained in Surah A'raaf that Ikhfa' (silence) is Mustahab in Dua. This aayat is Nass in this regard because Allah Subhaanahu praises Zakariyya for this (i.e. for his silent dua)."*

The word, *nidaa* is not restricted to calling aloud, screaming and shouting. Even a silent dua is referred to with the descriptive word, *nidaa'* as is clearly evidenced by the Qur'aan. It is, therefore, incorrect to infer on the basis of the term, *nidaa',* that Nabi Yunus (alayhis salaam) had 'screamed' and 'shouted' in the belly of the fish when he had recited the Tasbeeh. At most, audibility could be inferred, and the conclusion would be nothing beyond an inference stemming from the human mind. **There is no *Nass* regarding the manner of Hadhrat Yunus's dua. Was it *jahri* or *khafi?*** Every conclusion will be a human inference which cannot be presented as a basis for *istidlaal* (deduction of categorical ahkaam). The dua of Nabi Yunus (alayhis salaam) cannver constitute a basis for the collective loud Thikr performances in the Musaajid. But to establish the validity of audibility *(mutlaq jahr)* there is no need to undertake a journey into the deep

ocean. Above the ocean, on land, there are copious Ahaadith for this purpose.

(iii) Then the venerable Mufti Sahib cites Hadhrat Ayyoob's (alayhis salaam) dua as proof for 'loud' Thikr. In his pain and grief from years of suffering, Hadhrat Ayyoob (alayhis salaam) lying alone in the wilderness, called to Allah Ta'ala, petitioning Him for mercy. Indeed, it strains credulity to imagine that this cry of Hadhrat Ayyoob (alayhis salaam) lying alone, forlorn and smitten by diseases could ever be proof for the current loud collective Thikr programmes conducted boisterously in the Musaajid in conflict with the Sunnah.

Furthermore, the dispute does not centre on the issue of audible Thikr. The dispute is loud collective Thikr which has degenerated into bid'ah. There is not a hint of support for the Mufti Sahib's case in the dua of Hadhrat Ayyoob (alayhis salaam).

(iv) The honourable Mufti Sahib then proceeds to present the example of Hadhrat Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam) and Hadhrat Nabi Haroon (alayhis salaam) as proof for the loud collective Thikr programmes in vogue in the Musaajid nowadays. Citing the Qur'aanic aayat, he says: *"Allah Ta'ala in the Noble Qur'aan has quoted the words of Hazrat Musa (Alaihis Salaam): "So that we may glorify and remember You excessively." In Ma'aariful Qur'an this verse is explained as follows: The benefit of appointing Hazrat Haroon (Alaihis Salaam) as a minister and a partner in the prophethood of Hazrat Musa (Alaihis Salaam) was so that they could collectively remember Allah."*

There is no indication in this verse that Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam) and Nabi Haroon (alayhis salaam) would sit in a halqah

in the Musjid and engage in loud collective Thikr. The aayat does not exceed the assertion of making abundant Thikr. Hadhrat Musaa (alayhis salaam) only said: "So that we recite Your tasbeeh abundantly and that we remember You." Numerous persons can engage in Thikr in the same location without doing so collectively and loudly. If a number of people in the Musjid enage in silent Thikr individually, it will be correct to say: 'All the musallis are engaging in Thikrullah.'

The statement only signifies that both will be engaging in the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala at all times and in all conditions. This is the meaning of Hadhrat Musa's statement: *"So that we recite Your tasbeeh in abundance...."* There is no support whatsoever in this statement for the loud collective Thikr programmes conducted in the Musaajid.

(10) Qur'aan and Hadith Proofs for loud Thikr

(a) The honourable Mufti Sahib cites the following Qur'aanic aayat in support of loud collective Thikr in the Musaajid: *"Allah Ta'ala says in the Noble Qur'an: 'When you have completed your Haj rituals then remember Allah Ta'ala as you would remember your forefathers, or even more intense than that.' Commentary: From this verse it is clear that the zikr of Allah Ta'ala should be made audibly because during the Days of Ignorance, the people on the basis of pride remembered their forefathers openly. They did not do so secretly nor silently in their hearts."*

The Mufti Sahib's commentary is highly ambiguous and misleading. He presents the practice of the mushrikeen as a basis for collective loud Thikr. According to the Mufti Sahib's logic, collective loud Thikr is permissible because during the days of Hajj, the mushrikeen would vociferously and loudly

proclaim the virtues and glories of their ancestors. This is the Mufti Sahib's basis. It would have saved him from self-inflicted academic immolation if he had rather laboured more arduously to hack out a basis from some practices of the Sahaabah. But, to present the stupid *amal* of the mushrikeen as a basis for the imagined validity of collective loud Thikr, is to fall from the sublime to the ridiculous.

The solitary audible Thikr during the Hajj ibaadat, namely the Talbiyah, has also ended with the striking of the first pebble at the Jamrah. There remains now no mandatory act of audible Thikr. There is no Masnoon audible Thikr ordered during these days. The Mufti Sahib's claim is therefore baseless.

His opinion that Thikr during these days 'should be audible' is bereft of Shar'i substance. His opinion in fact is tantamount to promoting an accretion which comes within the purview of bid'ah because nowhere does the Shariah order that the Thikr during this period 'should be audible'. The imposition of incumbency is the right of only Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Only an act of ibaadat substantiated by the Sunnah or observed by the Sahaabah will be considered to be Masnoon. No one has the right to impose on others his personal understanding and interpretation, giving it the status of ibaadat or wujoob. By saying that the Thikr during these days *'should be audible'*, the venerable Mufti Sahib has overstepped the bounds of the Shariah, hence the Qur'aanic stricture: *"These are the limits of Allah. Do not transgress them",* is applicable here.

This logic is absurd and has no basis in the Shariah. The essential factor debunking the Mufti Sahib's opinion is that the Shariah has not imposed any mandatory form of Thikr during these days, whether audible or silent. It is a period of abundant

Thikr and ibaadat, and it has to be maintained free of the accretions of bid'ah.

It is bizarre to argue that since the mushrikeen loudly and vociferously sung the praises of their ancestors, Muslims too are required to loudly sing the praises of Allah Ta'ala. The Mufassireen have explicitly stated that the effect of the Aayat's command is 'to engage in abundant Thikr', not loud Thikr. Stating this fact, it appears in *Tafseerul Mazhari:*

"Allah's statement: 'And remember Allah like you remember your fathers or a remembrance of greater intensity', is not a comparison with jahr, but (the comparison) is in making Thikr in abundance (ikkthaar)."

(b) Among his imagined Qur'aanic proofs for the *specific forms* of loud collective Thikr conducted in the Musaajid, is his averment: *"Allah Ta'ala says: "And who can be more oppressive than him who prevents the name of Allah Ta'ala from being mentioned in the Houses of Allah Ta'ala."*

"Allah Ta'ala says in the Noble Qur'an: 'And remember your Lord fearfully and silently in your heart; do not remember Him too loudly."

Firstly, the translation, *"do not remember Him too loudly"*, is incorrect. The correct translation of the terms '*doonal jahr'* is 'less than loudness'. There is a difference between 'too loudly' and 'less than loudness'. The aayat negates loudness, whereas the Mufti Sahib's translation negates excessive loudness. The aayat instructs that the recitation should be less than *jahr*, i.e. not loud. The meaning is clear: the recitation may be a whisper or above a whisper, but not loud as the Mufti Sahib's

translation implies. Less than 'excessive loudness' and 'less than loudness' have different meanings.

Secondly this aayat in fact refutes the loud collective Thikr in the Musaajid. At these Thikr performances, the participants indulge in excessive *jahr (jahr-e-mufrit)* bordering on screaming. *'Doonal Jahr* (less than *jahr)* is not an attribute of the public Thikr performances.

The explicit instruction in this aayat to make Thikr *"in your heart with humility and fear"* confirms the superiority of silent Thikr as opposed to the advocacy of loud Thikr which the Mufti Sahib seeks to extrapolate from this very aayat which negates *jahr*. Whereas the aayat negates *jahr*, public performance and show, the honourable Mufti Sahib attempts to utilize it (the aayat) for an opposite objective, namely, the promotion of *jahr*, and public performance which generally is accompanied by *riya, ujub and takabbur.*

The logic of the Mufti Sahib baffles the mind. The aayat emphasizes silence, concealment, humility and fear in Thikr. But the Mufti Sahib extravagated an interpretation entirely out of the character of the meaning of this verse for the sake of vindicating the unsubstantiated *specific* form of loud collective Thikr which is incrementally becoming prevalent in the Musaajid.

Thirdly, this aayat addresses an individual. The individual is commanded in the methodology of Thikr. There is not the remotest hint in this aayat for collective public Thikr programmes which are in diametric conflict with the silence, secrecy, concealment, humility and fear commanded in this gracious aayat.

Although according to Hadhrat Ibn Abbaas (radhiyallahu anhu) this particular aayat only refers to Qiraa't in Salaat, the Mufassireen in general explain that the verse refers to *Mutlaq Thikr* (Thikr in general). The *specific program of loud collective Thikr* has to be necessarily excluded from the universality of *Mutlaq Thikr* in view of the following factors:

- It (the loud collective Thikr) is beyond the confines of *'nafsika'* (silent Thikr in the heart).
- It does not come within the scope of *'Doonal Jahr bil Qaul'*.
- It is generally bereft of *'tadharru'* (humility) and *'kheefah'* (heartfelt fear).
- It is an act of self-expression *(Izhaar)* whereas the individual's silent Thikr in solitude is an act of concealment *(Ikhfa')*. The attribute of *khafy* (concealment which goes with silence) is the conspicuous theme of the aayat.

Ma-aariful Qur'aan presenting the tafseer of this aayat, says: "In these two verses (i.e. 205 and 206 of Surah Al-A'raaf), according to the *Jamhoor* (the overwhelming majority of the Mufassireen) is the rule pertaining to *Mutlaq Thikrullah* and its *aadaab* (etiquettes, respects), which includes tilaawat of the Qur'aan. According to Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Abbaas (radhiyallahu anhu) these verses refer to only the Qur'aan and the *aadaab* mentioned here relate to tilaawat of the Qur'aan. However, this is not really a difference because, besides the Qur'aan, these very same *aadaab* apply to other *athkaar* (forms of Thikr) according to all authorities. In short, in this aayat is the explanation of the rule for man's Thikr of Allah, its times and etiquettes."

This Tafseer has further severely dented the 'proof' which the venerable Mufti Sahib has attempted to extrapolate from the aayat. In terms of the version of Hadhrat Ibn Abbaas (radhiyallahu anhu) this aayat is restricted to only Qur'an tilaawat. Hence, from this viewpoint, the loud collective public and unsubstantiated Thikr programmes simply do not feature.

Commenting on *'Doonal Jahr bil Qaul',* Tafseer Qurtubi states: "Dua with the tongue for Allah in silence without *jahr. …….Ibn Zaid narrated: "There should not be jahr with it." Mujaahid said: "They are commanded to make Thikr in their hearts with humility and fear." Ibn Juraij said (in the tafseer of this aayat): "Raf'us saut (raising the voice), nidaa'(loud calling) and siyaah (screaming) with dua are Makrooh (i.e. Makrooh Tahrimi)."*

Explaining *'Doonal Jahr bil qaul',* Tafseerul Mazhari states: "A speech above *sirr* (total silence) and less than *Jahr* (loudness)."

The net result of this tafseer is that the Thikr may be a whisper, if the thaakir does not opt for the option of total silence. Less than *jahr* is a whisper or above a whisper, but never the loudness which echoes and shakes the walls of the Musjid.

The audible Thikr which is less than *jahr* mentioned in this aayat refers to *Mutlaq Thikr*. It is not a support for the type of loud collective Thikr being conducted with considerable ostentation in public places.

(d) The honourable Mufti Sahib poses the question: *"Thus when the Qur'an – one of the forms of zikr – can be recited loudly, why can other forms of zikr such as reciting the kalima, etc. not be recited aloud when both are regarded as zikr?"*

The criticism is directed specifically to the *specific forms of loud collective Thikr* which has become customary in the Musaajid nowadays.

Excessive Thikr

The Mufti Sahib using this Hadith as a basis, seeks to elevate loud zikr above silent Thikr which the Qur'aan and Sunnah promote and elevate, and on which there exists *Ijma'* (Consensus) of the Ummah. The Mufti Sahib's foundational pillar in his system of reasoning is 'inference'. He has no explcit *dalaa-il* to substantiate his collective loud Thikr public performances. His personal inferences are not evidence and basis for structuring Shar'i *ahkaam.*

The Mufti Sahib has been constrained to adopt this line of reasoning in defence of the loud collective Thikr programs which he espouses zealously for want of *Nusoos* (explicit Qur'aanic and Sunnah evidence). A man of knowledge is not supposed to unduly emphasise a permissibility which is of secondary importance in order to substantiate a practice which has no origin in the Sunnah, and which is developing into a bid'ah.

The Hadith mentions abundant Thikr, not loud Thikr. A Shar'i *hukm* cannot be structured on the basis of the Mufti Sahib's personal opinion which has no standing in the Shariah.

The Talbiyah

(f) The Mufti Sahib's attempt to gain support for the loud collective Thikr programmes by referring to the audible recitation of the Talbiyah during Hajj time, and the occasional recitation of a poem by some Sahaabah, is incredulous. The Talbiyah is a Waajib act of ibaadat.

Talbiyah and poems may not be cited as a basis for fabricating a specific form of Thikr which has no basis in the Sunnah. The Talbiyah has a basis in the Sunnah, and so have all the other Shar'i acts of audible Thikr. According to the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen, the audible forms of ahthkaar such as Talbiya, Athaan, etc., are exceptions which are excluded from the Principle of *Ikhfa'* which applies to Thikr and dua. Exceptions should not be regarded as the principle. The primary principle is the basis of formulating a hukm. Not the exception.

Takbeer

The loud Takbeer cry on the battlefield is a glaring exception and cannot be presented to justify an unsubstantiated loud collective Thikr programme which is being projected as 'Sunnah' ibaadat. The Mufti Sahib with his logic has ignored the *Asal* and has grasped the exception. Instead of applying the principle, *'The asal in athkaar is ikhfa' and jahr is bid'ah',* the Mufti Sahib inverts the process and makes the exception the principle.

‘THE VIEWS OF THE SCHOLARS OF ISLAM’

The only achievement of the Mufti Sahib in this regard was to build a case for permissibility of audible Thikr which in any case has never been challenged by us. We reiterate our acceptance of the permissibility of audible Thikr.

It was unknown to the Sahaabah and the Taabieen, hence the excesses render such a practice *Bid’ah.*

In view of the biased attitude of the venerable Mufti Sahib it will be best to present an elaborate exposition of the views of the Fuqaha and Mufassireen on this topic for the benefit of readers.

TAFSEER MAZHARI

There is *Ijma’ (Consensus)* of the Ulama that verily, Thikr *sirran* (silently) is *afdhal* (superior, more meritorious), and *jahr* with Thikr is *Bid’ah* except in special cases when *jahr* is necessary, e.g. Athaan, Iqaamah, Takbeeraat Tashreeq, Takbeeraat Intiqaal in Salaat for the Imaam, Tasbeeh for the Muqtadi (to correct the Imaam’s error), Talbiyah in Hajj, etc………..

The *Asal* (the actual principle) in *athkaar* is *Ikhfa’* while *jahr* with it is *bid’ah.* Thus when there is a conflict in *jahr,* then the lesser one will be preferred. The statement of Hasan, indicates silent Thikr is *afdhal,* and on it is the *Ijma’* of the Sahaabah and of those who followed them (the Taabieen). His statement is, *‘Verily between a silent dua and a public dua there are seventy*

ranks'. (i.e. silent Thikr is seventy times superior than audible Thikr).

The narrations which mention certain Sahaabah engaging in loud Thikr, are isolated examples. It was not the practice of the generality of the Sahaabah. While isolated examples indicate permissibility of Thikr-e-jahr, these cases cannot be presented as a basis for the claim that loud Thikr is the norm and has greater merit than *Thikr-e-Khafi.*

The stages of Thikr

Jahr

(1) *Jahr* – raising the voice with it (Thikr). This is Makrooh (Makrooh Tahrimi – reprehensible and forbidden) by *Ijma'* (i.e. the Consensus of the Sahaabah and Taabieen), except when there is valid cause and *hikmah* dictates it.

Thikr bil Lisaan Sirran

(2) *Thikr bil lisaan sirran* – silent verbal Thikr. This is the objective of Rasulullah's statement: *"Your tongue should forever be moist with Thikrullaah."*

Thikr bil Qalb

The enumeration of the stages of Thikr by Mazhari is significant. First is *Jahri Thikr* which in general is Makrooh. Second is *Sirri Lisaani Thikr (silent verbal Thikr)* which is highly meritorious, and which is unanimously superior to permissible audible Thikr (Thikr devoid of excessive loudness). The third stage is the highest. It is such silent Thikr deep in the innermost recesses of the heart – Thikr of which even the Guarding Angels are unaware. It should now be clear that the greater the degree of *Ikhfa', the greater the merit of the Thikr.*

The attempt by the honourable Mufti Sahib to portray superiority for loud, collective Thikr enacted as a public performance is thus deplorable. Even the endeavour to prove that permitted audible Thikr is superior to silent Thikr, is lamentable.

MA'AARIFUL QUR'AAN

Imaam Ahmad, Ibn Hibbaan, Baihqi and others narrated from Hadhrat Sa'd Bin Abi Waqqaas (radhiyallahu anhu) that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"The best Thikr is Thikr Khafi and the best rizq is what suffices (for needs)."

Yes, at particular times and special occasions, *jahr* is desireable and *afdhal.* Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has clarified these times and occasions with his command and practice, for example, reciting the Athaan and Iqaamah with raised voice, reciting qiraa't audibly in the *Jahri* Salaat; raising the voice with Takbeeraat-e-Intiqaal, Takbeeraat-e-Tashreeq and Talbiyah during Hajj, etc. Thus, the Fuqaha (rahmatullah alayhim) have in this regard issued the verdict there should be *jahr* at the particular times and occasions which Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had instructed either by way of statement or practice. Besides these special occasions (instructed by Rasulullah – sallallahu alayhi wasallam), *Thikr Khafi* is *aula* (better and more preferable) and *anfa'* (more beneficial)." *End of Ma-aariful Qur'aan's exposition.*

The salient aspects in the aforementioned Tafseer presented by Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi' (rahmatullah alayh) are:

* Thikr-e-Khafi is superior to reasonable Thikr-e-Jahr. On this there exists *Ijma'* of the Sahaabah, Taabi-een and Salf-e-Saaliheen.

* The occasions when Thikr-e-Jahr is better, and in fact, mandatory, have been specified by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), himself. Thus, no one has the right to introduce a special form of loud collective Thikr practice in the Musaajid. Such an innovation, when it becomes entrenched, will embed in the minds of the masses that this practice is the Sunnah.

* The customary *jahri* dua practices in vogue in numerous Musaajid are not permissible. Thikr has been included in this category by Hadhrat Mufti Shafi' (rahmatullah alayh).

Noteworthy is Hadhrat Mufti Shafi's criticism of the customary method of *jahri* dua after the daily Fardh Salaat despite the fact that there is a basis in the Sunnah for Dua after Fardh Salaat. To a far greater degree will the criticism apply to loud collective Thikr which has no basis in the Sunnah.

* The *jahri Thikr* which the Mashaaikh of the Chishti Silsilah prescribe are meant for the *Mubtadi (the novice who has just been initiated)*, and the objective of such Thikr is to serve as a spiritual remedy. It has not been introduced as a substitute for Masnoon acts of ibaadat.

An interesting observation in Tafseer Roohul Ma'aani is the statement: *"You will see numerous from the people of your age screaming in dua, specially in the Jawaami' (public Musjids where the masses at large attend). So much so that there prevails much noise and the ears are deafened. However, they do not know that they have combined two bid'ahs – raising the voice in dua and doing that in the Musjid."*

The honourable Mufti Sahib will most assuredly argue that in the loud collective Thikr programmes presently in vogue, screaming is not practised. All acts of bid'ah had generally commenced with good intentions and at a slow pace. The vile accretions were a gradual process.

TAFSEER IBN KATHEER

Tafseer Ibn Kathir presents the same exegis which appears in Tafseer Mazhari and Ma-aariful Qur'aan. There is therefore no need to repeat it here.

Thikr Gatherings in the Musaajid

The Mufti Sahib claims: *"The Ulama have unanimously agreed that it is preferable to host gatherings of zikr in the Masaajid as well as out of the Masaajid…"*

Here the Mufti Sahib, in addition to referring to loud Thikr, implies organizing of group-form Thikr. On the contrary, the Fuqaha have unanimously agreed on the *afdhaliyyat* (superiority and preferability) of silent Thikr. And, how is it possible for them to have 'agreed unanimously' that loud Thikr in congregational form is superior in the face of the explicit and abundant *Nusoos* to the contrary? The facts of the Shariah rebut this spurious claim profferred by the venerable Mufti Sahib. These irrefutable facts are:

(a) The Aayaat of the Qur'aan-e-Kareem.
(b) The Ahaadith of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).
(c) The practice of the Sahaabah.
(d) The practice of the Taabi-een and the Salf-e-Saaliheen in general.

Any statement of anyone, be he a Faqeeh or Sufi or Wali, which conflicts with the *Nusoos* and the Sunnah shall be set aside and suitably interpreted to reconcile it with the mainstream *Ijma'*. The need for interpretation and reconciliation regarding such stray, odd and isolated views develops when the view is attributed to an Aalim of the Haqq who has genuinely slipped by the presentation of an untenable view.

Thus, it is seen that as a norm and permanent practice, the Thikr and Dua of the Sahaabah and Taabieen were silent.

On the other hand, there are isolated incidents of some Sahaabah having engaged in audible Thikr. But this was not the standing practice. Isolated practices should not be selected and given preference when these are in conflict with the teaching and spirit of the Qur'aan and Sunnah.

The honourable Mufti Sahib has resorted to this improper tactic of selecting isolated examples and some miniscule views to build a case for loud collective public Thikr entirely oblivious of what actually the Qur'aan commands and what exactly was the normal practice of the Sahaabah and Taabieen on this issue. Instead of maintaining course and 'proving' the validity, permissibility and superiority of the *specific forms* of loud collective Thikr performances being customarily conducted nowadays in the Musaajid, the venerable Mufti Sahib has been deflected from this subject by lack of Shar'i evidence.

The view of '**some** men of knowledge' is indeed a very far cry from the claim of consensus on the superiority of loud Thikr.

Shaami mentioning the proof of the *some* men of knowledge, cites the Hadith: *"If he (the thaakir) remembers Me in a*

gathering, I remember him in a better gathering." Refuting this 'proof', Tafseer Mazhari says: *"Some people (i.e. the some men of knowledge mentioned by Shaami) have thought that this Hadith indicates superiority of Thikr-e-jahr over Thikr-e-Khafi. However, this is devoid of substance because there is no excellence of Allah remembering His servant in a gathering over Allah remembering him in His Nafs. In fact, the reality is the opposite. And, the spiritual appeal of this explanation is perceived by those who have tasted from the Cup of Divine Love."*

Hence, Shaami says: *"If (the Thikr) is devoid of these (evils such as riya, etc.) which have been mentioned, then some people of knowledge say that jahr is afdhal."*

The honourable Mufti Sahib, in defence of the customary loud collective Thikr displays in the Musaajid, states: *"The Ulama have unanimously agreed that it is preferable to host gatherings of zikr in the Muasaajid as well as out of the Masaajid, except in the case when making loud zikr would disturb a person who is sleeping, or performing Salaah or reciting the Holy Qur'an."*

This claim appears in Shaami as well as in other kutub. Rejecting this notion, Tafseer Mazhari says: *"The original practice in Athkaar is Ikhfa' while jahr is bid'ah. Hence, when there is a conflict in jahr, then the lessor category will be preferred."* The 'lesser category' in this regard is the *Istihbaab* (being Mustahab, preferability) of *Thikr-e-Khafi.* What this means is that if certain Ahaadith indicate *Thikr-e-jahr* while other narrations point to the superiority of *Thikr-e-khafi,* then the way of reconciliation is to conclude the superiority of *Thikr-e-Khafi* in the *Istihbaab* category. But *never* will *Thikr-e-jahr* be superior to *Thikr-e-khafi.*

The alleged consensus on the superiority of *Thikr jahr* stated in Shaami is erroneous. There exists no such *Ijma'*. How could there be consensus on this issue, when:

- The Qur'aan Majeed emphasises the superiority of *Thikr-e-Khafi.*
- The practice of the Sahaabah and Taabieen was *Thikr-e-Khafi.*
- Imaam Abu Hanifah states that *Thikr jahr* is bid'ah.
- Some other Fuqaha say that it is haraam.
- Some Ulama say it is Makrooh.
- All Four Imaams say that *Thikr-e-Khafi* is Mustahab.

In *Kifaayatul Mufti*, Hadhrat Maulana Kifayatullah (rahmatullah alayh) states: *"In circumstances where Thikr jahr is not established by the Shariah, if there are no adverse factors then the ruling is that it is permissible. If there is an accompanying adverse factor, then it (the audible Thikr) will not be permissible. Examples of such adverse factors are the jahr of the thaakir disturbs a sleeping person, or it disturbs a musalli performing Salaat, or the thaakir considers jahr to be necessary or incumbent, etc. Where these factors do not exist, Thikr-e-jali (audible Thikr) is permissible, but Thikr-e-Khafi is Aula (preferable, better and of greater merit)."* And why should it not be so, when this type of Thikr was the permanent and original practice of the Salf-e-Saaliheen – a practice commanded by the Qur'aan and Sunnah?

In another place in *Kifaayatul Mufti,* the ruling is reiterated as follows: *"When there are no other musallis in the Musjid, then it is permissible to recite loudly the Kalimah or the Qur'aan Majeed. But it is afdhal (then too) to recite silently."*

Imaam Sarakhsi states in his *Al-Mabsoot: "Ikhfa' in Dua is preferable. Allah Ta'ala says:* 'Call unto your Rabb with humility and in silence'."

The following appears in *Imdaadul Ahkaam,* Vol. 1, Page 316:
Question: In the dua after the five daily Fardh Salaat, the Imaam recites the dua, *Allahumma antas salaam,* audibly *(bil-jahr),* and the Muqtadis also say *bil-jahr, 'Sami'na wa ata'na....'* Is there anything wrong in perpetuating this method?
Answer: It is bid'at. All should say it silently. Constancy in reciting it audibly is also bid'at. Its *daleel* is what Allaamah Abdul Hayy states in his Fataawa narrating from Mudkhal: *"All of them should abstain from jahr with Thikr and dua after completing the Salaat if they are in Jama'at, for verily, that is bid'ah. According to Nisaabul Ihtisaab it is Makrooh for them to recite Takbeer audibly after Salaat. It is bid'ah except during the Days of Nahr and Tashreeq........The method in the aforementioned question is in conflict with the tareeqah of the Nabi and the tareeqah of the Salf-e-Saaliheen."*

Ibn Bittaal said: *"The authorities of the Math-habs and others are unanimous that raising the voice with takbeer and Thikr is not Mustahab. Ubaidah said that it is bid'ah." In Fathul Baari is mentioned: "It is preferable for the Imaam and Muqtadis to make Thikr silently except if there is the need for ta'leem."*

In Kabeeri it is mentioned: "According to Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) it is bid'ah to raise the voice with Thikr because it is in conflict with the command in Allah's statement: *'Call unto your Rabb with humility and in silence.'* "

Mullah Ali Qaari states in *Mirkaat:* "Some of our Ulama have explicitly said that raising voices in the Musjid even with Thikr is haraam."

In Sharh Muslim, Imaam Nawawi (rahmatullah alayh) said: Without difference of opinion, dua shall be made silently."

Imaam Siraajuddin Al-Hanafi said: "Ikhfa' in dua is Mustahab." Hadhrat Shaikh Abdul Haq (rahmatullah alayh) is quoted in the *Haashiyah of Mishkaat*: "In it (i.e. Shar'i practices such as Athaan), *jahr* is established in terms of Shar'i daleel. However, in acts which are not established in the Shariah, *Khafi* (silent Thikr) is best."

The votaries of *Thikr bil jahr* are entirely bereft of any *Qat'i* (Absolute in certitide) and *Sareeh* (explicit) proof.

It should be well understood that when a permissible act or even a Mustahab act is elevated above its status and by virtue of permanency the idea of its incumbency becomes entrenched in the minds of the masses, then such an act degenerates into bid'ah. It will be incumbent to abstain from it. Allaamah Khalil Ahmad Ambethwi (rahmatullah alayh) states in his *Baraahin-e-Qaatiah: "A mubah act, in fact even a Mandoob act, because of 'iltizaam' (rigid and perpetual observance) and the belief of its emphasis becomes bid'ah, hence not permissible. Therefore, even the Ta-aamul (practice) of the Mutqaddimeen is not hujjat (proof) in this regard."*

The *Usool* of the Shariah will be invoked and fatwa issued even if there appears to be a conflict with the practice of the Mutaqaddimeen.

The honourable Mufti Sahib adopts a queer method of reasoning in his bid to confer superiority to loud Thikr. For example, he cites Mufti Kifaayatullah (rahmatullah alayh) on the permissibility of audible Thikr. Firstly the permissibility of audible Thikr, provided it is devoid of haraam factors, is not

contested. Although there appears at the end of Mufti Kifayatullah's fatwa, the categorical statement (which the venerable Mufti Sahib did in fact mention): *"However, silent Thikr is better."* The (the Mufti Sahib) irrationally persists with the claim that audible Thikr is better.

THE AUDIBLE THIKR PRACTICES IN THE KHANQAS

Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi

Hakimul Ummat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh), explaining the khaanqah Thikr, says: "But, *jahr* is not the actual objective *(maqsood bith-thaat)* nor is it by itself an act of thawaab. To subscribe to such a belief is bid'at. I believe that the Hadith: *"Verily, you are not calling a deaf being nor an absent being…",* is in negation of this belief. Some say that it refers to *jahr mufrit* (excessive loudness) which causes distress to others, e.g. a sleep of someone is disturbed. This is the interpretation of Imaam Abu Hanifah's prohibition (of Thikr jahr), otherwise *jahr per se* is permissible.

………….. It is thus apparent that *jahr* itself is not an ibaadat. If Thikr is believed to be the objective and *jahr* is adopted for some expediency such as warding off stray thoughts, gaining concentration, etc., then this will not be prohibited on condition there is no accompanying adverse factor.

What is difficult to comprehend is the inability of a man of knowledge to understand the self-evident fact that the *Asal (Primary rule)* cannot be superseded by exceptions which are in conflict with the primary principle.

Further explaining the status of the khaanqah Thikr, Hakimul Ummat (rahmatullah alayh) says in his *Malfoothaat*: *"Islaah (self-reformation) is achieved by remedying the ailments of the nafs. Athkaar are like medicine and pills which could be prepared by studying the books of medicine. However, the need*

of a qualified medical practitioner is imperative for diagnosing the illness and prescribing a remedy. Similarly, Thikr formulae and ashghaal (spiritual exercises) are recorded in books. However, there is the need for a spiritual guide to diagnose the spiritual ailments of the nafs and to prescribe remedies for reformation."

Commenting on the objective of khaanqah Thikr and shaghl, Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) says: "In their letters, even men who have a high degree of sincerity mention their constancy in Thikr (i.e. the prescribed forms of Thikr). They request for dua. It seems that to them islaah of the nafs is insignificant. They regard Thikr (khaanqah-type Thikr) and shaghl to be the actual aim (maqsood) to be pursued. On the contrary, Islaah is the true objective. Thikr facilitates the achievement of Islaah of the Nafs. – *Malfoothaat*

Criticizing the degeneration of the khaanqahs of this era, Hakimul Ummat states: "Our Haji Sahib (rahmatullah alayh) said: 'A principle of the Mashaaikh of former times was the impartation of ta'leem to persons in accordance with their ability. For some, they devised domestic work, and on others they imposed some different type of activity. (It is not always these specific forms of Thikr). Now it has become the norm to instruct everyone with the Thikr of *Ism-e-Zaat* (Allaahu) 24,000 times, whether the poor soul survives or perishes. In fact, they do not even confine themselves to this form of Thikr. They dole out whatever comes to mind."

"Even with regard to *Dalaail-e-Khairaat,* I draw the attention of my friends to the considerable time required to recite a lengthy *manzil* (chapter). Instead of this, the same amount of time should be spent rather reciting the Durood Shareef which the entire Ummah recites in Salaat. Furthermore, this Durood

was prescribed by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).” – *Malfoothaat*

Tilaawat

The ultimate aim of Thikr is tilaawat of the Qur’aan Shareef.

“The Mashaaikh of former times paid great attention to reformation of moral character. They underwent intense struggles and hardships to achieve this goal. Some worked for years in bathrooms; some spent years in the wilderness. During those times they did not pay much attention to (khaanqah-type) Thikr and shaghl. Their courage and resolve were great. They could bear the severest hardship. The *Baarah Tasbeeh* Thikr (the 12 prescribed tasbeehs – non-Sunnah) was considered to be very advanced while nowadays this is the elementary instruction issued to mureeds.”

Thikr Jahr in the Khaanqah

Question: “In Ramadhaan Shareef, in the Musjid during Taraaweeh Namaaz after performing four raka’ts, if all the musallis collectively recite Tasbeeh and make Dua, and with the niyyat of proclaiming the glory, grandeur and glitter of Islam, they recite the Kalimah *‘Laa ilaha illallaah’* with *jahr* (loudly), will this be permissible or not?”

Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi responded:

“To make Thikr in this manner after the jalsah (sitting) during the Taraaweeh has not been narrated from the Sahaabah and Taabieen. Therefore, this *ha’it (specific form) is bid’at.* It is mentioned in *Al-Waaqiaat*: *‘Reciting Surah Faatihah after the Fardh Salaat on occasions of events of upheaval (such as*

calamity, fear and disaster, etc.) is Makrooh (Tahrimi) because it is Bid'at in view of the fact that it has not been narrated from the Sahaabah and Taabieen.'

It is also stated in Bahrur Raa-iq that it has been narrated from Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) that he heard a group of people had gathered in the Musjid and were reciting *Lailaha illal laah* and Durood on Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) audibly *(jahran).* Then he went to them and said: *"During the age of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) we did not practise in this manner. I do not consider you except as mubtadieen (innovators).'* He continued saying so until he expelled them."

On the basis of these two evidences, even though Thikr is *mutlaqan jaa-iz*, but to change a special form which had prevailed during *Quroon-e-Thalaathah* (the three noble eras of Islam) is bid'at. Hence, despite Kalimah Tayyibah being permissible *jahran* on its occasions of permissibility, but during the sitting of Taraaweeh this practice is not proven, hence to do so is bid'at. In addition the masses will think that this practice is Sunnat. A mubah (permissible practice) which the masses believe to be Sunnat is bid'at.

It is mentioned in Aalamgheeriyah (Fataawa Hindiyyah): *'The practice which is done after Salaat is Makrooh because the juhhaal (ignoramuses) will believe it to be Sunnat or even Waajib. Every Mubah (permissible practice) which leads to this is Makrooh. So is it reported in Az-Zaahidi.'*

Thus, it is bid'at to make Thikr in this manner despite Thikr *per se* of Kalimah Tayyibah with *jahr* being permissible. However, at this occasion this *hai't* is not proven from *Quroon-e-Thalaathah.* On the contrary, this is an occasion of *Ikhfa'*,

hence it is bid'at. Furthermore, in this practice there is the danger of corrupting the Aqeedah (belief) of the masses. And Allah knows best." – *End of Hadhrat Gangohi's dissertation.* (Tazkiratur Rasheed)

The Qur'aan Majeed says: *"And, none takes lesson except the People of Intelligence."* From the aforementioned *faqeehaanah* (juridical and wise) exposition of Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), every unbiased, intelligent seeker of the Haqq will observe the following salient aspects which clinches the whole dispute in which the venerable Mufti Sahib has become mired:

(a) Despite Hadhrat Gangohi being a Khaanqah Shaikh, who engaged in *khafeef* (very light) *Thikr bil Jahr*, he unequivocally branded the specific form of collective loud Thikr as being bid'at.

(b) The collective loud Thikr is bid'at because this practice did not exist in the initial three noble eras of Islam.

(c) The validity of the Abstention argument is confirmed by Hadhrat Gangohi, namely, this practice did not exist in the Sunnah, hence it is bid'ah.

(d) The authenticity of the narration of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) is vindicated. Hadhrat Gangohi did not argue away the act of Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) with any of the defective interpretations which the votaries of bid'ah attribute to the said narration. On the contrary, he cited it from an authentic Kitaab of Fiqh, *Bahrur Raa-iq,* as evidence in refutation of bid'ah. Despite being a Chishti Shaikh practising *Thikr bil Jahr* in his Khaanqah, he upheld the Hadith of Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu

anhu), and did not lamely argue it away in order to justify and vindicate the practices of the khaanqah. He was a Man of Ilm and Taqwa. Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) along with being an *Aashiq* and an *Aarif Billaah*, was a *Faqeeh* whose primary function was to guard the Shariah and the beliefs of the masses.

We trust that the venerable Mufti Sahib being an upholder of khaanqah practices, now sees the way clear for accepting the authenticity of the Hadith of Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) and the validity and wisdom of Hadhrat Mas'ood's act of expelling from the Musjid those who had engaged in *collective loud Thikr.* Hadhrat Gangohi's presentation of the Hadith of Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) is a glowing affirmation of the authenticity of the narration. The authenticity is further enhanced by its appearance in an authoritative Kitaab of Fiqh.

(e) When the masses see Ulama and Sulaha engaging in Thikr practices, they will naturally infer that such acts are Sunnat, and when they see the *iltizaam* with which these practices are observed by the Ulama, then they naturally and justifiably begin to believe that these acts of 'ibaadat' are Waajib.

(f) The principle of existence and non-existence of an ibaadat practice during *Khairul Quroon* is an important and a necessary determinant and criterion for all practices of Thikr which are executed in the full view of the masses.

(g) Khaanqah practices should not be cited as a basis for justifying acts of Thikr which have no basis in the Sunnah.

(h) There is a stark difference in *Thikr bil jahr* conducted in the privacy of the khaanqah and in *Thikr bil jahr collectively*

executed in public Musaajid frequented by the masses. While the former does not corrupt the beliefs of the masses nor develop into bid'ah in which the masses become entrapped, the latter undoubtedly corrupts the Aqeedah of the masses and develops into bid'ah.

(i) **It is imperative that collective loud Thikr practices which were not in vogue during the era of the Noble Ages, not be advertised in public Musaajid. Any khaanqah practice should be confined to the four walls of the khaanqah or to private homes of the mureedeen who engage in such practices.**

Khafeef Jahr

In another *Malfooth*, Hadhrat Thaanvi says: "Listen carefully! The expediency of *Thikr bil Jahr* among the Chishtiyyah is for the *Thaakir's* voice to reach his own ears in order to ward off stray thoughts. This aim is acquired from *khafeef jahr* (slightly audible). Excessive loudness is a futile act which is reprehensible."

Not a Daleel

The Mufti Sahib is required to adhere to the proper *Dalaail* methodology of the Shariah to substantiate his claim. We need not explain these *Dalaa-il* to him. He is an honourable Mufti and a Shaikhul Hadith who is supposed to be aware. But, it is lamentable and painful for us to observe that the venerable Mufti Sahib has presented his booklet in the style and aura which are associated with the publications of the Ahl-e-Bid'ah, notably the bid'atis of Bareilwi, when they criticize the Ulama of Deoband.

Campaigning and Canvassing

"In this age there exists the disease of canvassing for mureeds. A mureed strives to rope in others to become the disciples of his sheikh."

THE MUFTI'S RESPONSE TO THE OBJECTIONS

The venerable Mufti Sahib further claims: *"According to the majority of commentators, the first verse quoted above was revealed regarding dua and not regarding zikr."* Indeed the Mufti Sahib has degenerated to the level of grabbing at straws in his futile attempt to refute the objection which has been directed against the bid'ah loud collective Thikr programmes. A subtle attempt has been made here to convey the impression that the majority of the Mufassareen has deleted *Thikr* from the scope of this aayat. But for this claim, the Mufti Sahib has not provided an iota of substantiating evidence.

The Mufti Sahib has only presented the explanation of the aayat given in Ruhul Ma'aani. Nowhere in the tafseer of the aayat does Ruhul Ma'aani contend that *Thikr* is excluded from the scope of the aayat. In fact, Ruhul Ma'aani also mentions the view of those who say that the meaning of 'dua' in the context of the aayat is *'Ibaadat'* which applies to *Thikr* as well. Further, Ruhul Ma'aani's tafseer does not exclude *Thikr* from the scope of the aayat. It only presents the explanation of the verse.

Explaining this aayat, Tafseer Mazhari states: *"Make His Thikr and ibaadat, and ask Him for your needs."* Although the aayat mentions dua specifically, Tafseer Mazhari bringing *Thikr* within its scope, says: *"Know that Thikr in general is ibaadat."* In the explanation of this verse, Tafseer Mazhari brings the Hadith: *"(Allah Ta'ala says): I am with him (My servant) when he makes My Thikr. If he makes My Thikr (i.e. remembers Me) in his heart, then I too remember him in My Heart…."* Although the text of the aayat states, 'dua', Mazhari as well as other Mufassireen extrapolate the rules of *Thikr* from it. Thus, Tafseer Mazhari continues: *"This Hadith applies to both Thikr jahr and Thikr khafi. Some persons had the impression that this Hadith indicates the superiority of jahr over khafi. However, this is devoid of substance…….There is consensus of the Ulama that silent Thikr is afdhal and loud Thikr is bid'ah…."*

For better intellectual registration, let us reiterate what we have cited a few lines above, from Ma-aariful Qur'aan: ***"The tahqeeq of the Ulama-e-Salf in this as well, is that Thikr Sirr is better than Thikr Jahr."***

It is abundantly clear from all these authentic narrations that Rasulullah's command to the Sahaabah to lower their voices on the occasion mentioned in these Ahaadith, pertains to *takbeer* and *tahleel* ***–Thikr*** *– not to dua* as averred by the venerable Mufti Sahib. The attempt to surreptitiously pass off this incident as an episode of Dua, and not Thikr, is flabby, reckless and improper.

Then the Mufti Sahib, continuing with his response to the first Objection, attempts to restrict the second aayat, namely Aayat 205 of Surah A'raaf, to the Makki era.

Ruhul Ma'aani does not confine this aayat to the Makki period nor to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). The verse has general application. It applies to all time and all people. Imaam Raazi (rahmatullah alayh) in his Tafseer Kabeer explicitly confirms this fact. Thus, he states: *"Know that Allah's statement: 'Remember your Rabb in your heart', although it is apparently addressing Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), it applies in general to all the Mutakallifeen (i.e. to all Muslimeen)."*

Although the Mufassireen explain the circumstance of the revelation of this aayat, they do not restrict the aayat's command to only Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). The honourable Mufti Sahib has also conveniently forgotten to quote Ma-aariful Qur'aan's tafseer of the 'second verse' although he did resort to Ma-aariful Qur'aan in an attempt to acquire some argument to bolster his view pertaining to the 'first verse'. The reason for bypassing Ma-aariful Qur'aan with regard to the second aayat is quite obvious. There is absolutely no proof and no grounds for the Mufti Sahib in Ma-aariful Qur'aan's explanation of the second verse. Hadhrat Mufti Shafi (rahmatullah alayh), in Ma-aariful Qur'aan, deals elaborately with the rules of Thikr and dua. No where does he confine the second verse to the Makki era and to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

Its meaning is to make Thikr with a low tone. In other words, one adab of Thikr and tilaawat is to recite with a low tone………"

The aayat has been utilized as a basis for confirming the superiority of *Thikr Khafi,* hence during the course of the tafseer of this 'second verse', Mazhari states: ***"Verily it has been said that jahr with Thikr and dua is bid'ah, and the***

Sunnat in both of them is Ikhfa' *as the mas'alah has been explained in the tafseer of Allah's statement: 'Call unto your Rabb with humility and in silence." (i.e. aayat 55 – the first verse).*

The venerable Mufti Sahib makes a futile endeavour to enlist the support of Hadhrat Maulana Abdul Hayy Lucknowi (rahmatullah alayh) for his view of the superiority of loud Thikr. It is a gross misrepresentation to create the impression that Hadhrat Maulana Abdul Hayy (rahmatullah alayh) subscribed to superiority of *Thikr jahr*. His view on the superiority of *Thikr-e-Khafi* is conspicuous and categoric. Let us now examine his Fatwa on this issue. The following question and answer appears in *Majmuah Fataawa* of Maulana Abdul Hayy (rahmatullah alayh):

"**QUESTION:** Nowadays after every Namaaz the people recite loudly four times *'Lailaha illallaah'* – three or four times. Then saying *'Allahu Akbar',* they shake their heads. Is there any substantiation for this in the age of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) or the Sahaabah or in the era of Imaam A'zam or his Students. If this method is narrated (authentically) from someone (some senior of those eras), may we promote this practice? If it is not substantiated, then what is the hukm of this customary practice? Is it necessary to prevent people from it or to adopt silence. Furthermore, is it *afdhal* to recite audibly or silently those *Athkaar* which are substantiated in our Hanafi Math-hab?"

ANSWER: This type of Thikr is not substantiated from Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) nor the Sahaabah nor the four Imaams and others (i.e. other Fuqaha). The Hanafi Ulama as well as the Ulama of the other Math-habs have explicitly stated that it is Mustahab to make Thikr silently after

Namaaz. However, it appears from some Ahaadith that during the age of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), some Sahaabah would audibly recite the takbeer after Namaaz.

However, the Shurraah (Commentators) of Hadith have said that this *Thikr jahri* applies to Jihad situations. They maintain that in relation to *jahr*, it is *afdhal* to recite silently. Some other Shurraah have said that this was done occasionally. However, they prohibit *Iltizaam* (i.e. to observe a practice with constancy as if it is Waajib). In the kitaab, *Al-Mudkhal* of Ibnul Haaj Maaliki, the following appears:

"Regarding the narration of Ibn Zubair that during the time of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), after he made the Salaam of the Salaat, he would recite in a raised voice, 'Lailaha illallaah wahdahu………….', and the narration of Ibn Abbaas that after completing Salaat the people would raise their voices with Thikr, there are two answers:

First is that which Imaam Shaafi has explained in Kitaabul Umm: 'Both the Imaam and the Ma'moom (the muqtadi) should engage in Thikrullaah silently after ending the Salaat except that it is incumbent (for the Muqtadi) to learn from the Imaam (what to recite). In this case the Imaam should recite audibly until he has understood that the muqtadi has learnt (the Thikr). Then he should revert to silent Thikr, for Allah Ta'ala says (in the Qur'aan): 'Do not make your voice loud nor (totally) silent.', i.e. with dua. 'La-tajhar, i.e. do not raise. La-tukhaafit, i.e. not too silent. You, yourself should be able to hear it.

The jahr which has been narrated by Ibn Zubair and Ibn Abaas is jahr for a short while so that the people could learn from him (Rasulullah – sallallahu alayhi wasallam). This explanation is

because the majority of narrations which we have recorded do not mention Thikr after the Salaam nor takbeer." This is Imaam Shaafi' who has explained it (the narrations mentioning audible Thikr after Salaat) in the light of Ta'leem. When the ta'leem has been served, then he (the Imaam) should stop (his audible Thikr). This (practice of ta'leem) is in conflict with today's custom of qiraa't, loud Thikr and ***congregating.*** *They do not intend ta'leem. On the contrary, their* ***intention is thawaab*** *(since they regard it to be the correct form of ibaadat).*

The second answer is what Abul Hasan Ibn Bittaal has explained in Sharh Saheeh Bukhaari when he explained the Hadith of Ibn Abbaas. It is probable that he related this to the Mujaahideen. If it is so, then it applies even today. When the Mujaahideen perform the five Salaat, it is Mustahab for them to recite takbeer aloud. They should raise their voices to instil fear in the enemy. If this is not the (acceptable) interpretation, then it (the practice of audible Thikr after Salaat) is ***Mansookh (abrogated) by virtue of Ijma****'. Not a single one of the Ulama is aware of it.*

In the same kitaab, *Al-Mudkhal,* it is mentioned: *"All should abstain from jahri Thikr after completing the Salaat if they are in jamaa't, for verily, it (Thikr jahr) is bid'ah."*

Allaamah Shaikhul Islam Badruddin Hanafi states in *Nihaayah, Sharah Hidaayah: "Abu Bakr Raazi said: 'Our Mashaaikh have said that there is no jahri takbeer other than during the days of Tashreeq or when confronting the enemy or robbers…"*
In Nisaabul Ihtisaab it appears: *"It is Makrooh to recite takbeer audibly after Salaat. Verily, it is bid'ah except during the days of Nahr and Tashreeq."* There are numerous similar texts (ibaaraat) from which *Thikr jahri* is proven to be ***Makrooh*** with

a few special exceptions. I have explained this in my treatise, *Sabaahatul Fikr Fil Jahr biz Zikr.*

The summary of this is: If besides the Days of Tashreeq, *Thikr jahr* is practised sometimes then there is nothing wrong on condition that the *jahr* is not excessive. If the objective of the *jahr* is ta'leem, then this is permissible. However, without these objectives, making special arrangements for it and observing it with *Iltizaam* is in conflict with the Tareeq of Nabi-e-Kareem (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the Salf-e-Saaliheen." *(End of Maulana Abdul Hayy's exposition)*

In this elaboration, Hadhrat Maulana Abdul Hayy (rahmatullah alayh) has sounded the death knell to the bid'ah collective loud Thikr performances which the honourable Mufti Sahib so dishonourably advocates and promotes.

In citing Hadhrat Maulana Abdul Hay Lucknowi (rahmatullah alayh) in an extremely lame endeavour to eke out support for his view on loud collective Thikr, the venerable Mufti Sahib has perpetrated a grave act of injustice against Hadhrat Maulana Abdul Hayy Sahib, as well as against the community of Islam. He has paraphrased Maulana Abdul Hayy's discussion on Thikr to present a thoroughly distorted and erroneous picture. Citing Hadhrat Maulana Abdul Hayy, the venerable Mufti Sahib says:

"Hazrat Moulana Abdul Hay Looknawi (Rahmatullah alaih) has explained this verse in detail in his kitab Sabaahatul Fikr Fil Jahri Biz-Zikr. A summary of his discussion is given hereunder:
1. This command of Allah Ta'ala is only for the sake of ease and not for compulsion.

11. This verse is not general in prohibiting loud zikr rather it prohibits one from excessively screaming when making zikr. This has also been explained by Imaam Raazi (Rahmatullah alaih) where he says that the verse under discussion prohibits one from screaming when making zikr; as Allah Ta'ala says in another verse: 'Do not perform your Salaat too loudly and neither too softly; but rather adopt a moderate mode."

Before presenting the true version of Maulana Abdul Hayy, the following comments of the Mufti Sahib should be considered in comjunction with the aforementioned 'summary' which the honourable Mufti Sahib has proffered. The need for viewing this in conjunction is because Maulana Abdul Hayy (rahmatullah alayh) responds to both the fallacies in a single inter-connected reply. Now, the venerable Mufti Sahib avers:

"Thus the verse under discussion was revealed during the Makkan period of prophethood whilst the verse "When you complete your Haj rituals then remember Allah Ta'ala as you would remember your forefathers." was revealed during the Madinah period of prophethood. Regarding this verse all commentators of the Qur'an are unanimnous that during the Days of Ignorance, the Polytheists used to proudly remember their forefathers aloud; and so as to instruct them to remember Allah Ta'ala instead, this verse was revealed."

The Mufti Sahib has attempted to show in this argument that just as the mushrikeen were remembering their forefathers in loud recitation of poetry, similarly, the Qur'aan orders the Mu'mineen to remember Allah excessively and loudly during these days after execution of the Hajj rituals. It is in the context of the attempt to prove the superiority and necessity of 'loudness' in Thikr that the Mufti Sahib has adduced this aayat as his 'proof'.

The Mufti Sahib had earlier on also presented a Hadith as 'proof' for superiority of loud Thikr. He stated: *"Hazrat Abu Saeed Khudri (Radiyallahu anhu) narrates that Rasoolullah (Sallallahu alaihi wasallam) said: "Make the zikr of Allah Ta'ala excessively to such an extent that people call you insane."*

Responding to these aforementioned claims made by the honourable Mufti Radhaahul Haq Sahib, Hadhrat Maulana Abdul Hayy (rahmatullah alayh) states in his *Majmuah Fataawa:*

"……If these people say that the Hadith: 'Make Thikr of Allah until the people say: 'Verily, he is mad.', indicates Thikr jahr, then the response is: We also say that jahr per se (nafs-e-jahr) is permissible. The conflict is in jahr mufrit (excessive loudness). The meaning of the Hadith is: Make abundant Thikr of Allah until they say: 'Verily, he is mad." Thus, the dalaalat (indication) of the Hadith is in fact, ***not on jahr at all****. Furthermore, the Qur'aanic aayaat indicate that Sirri Thikr is Mustahab or that the Thikr should be in such a moderate manner which is between jahr and sirr. Allah Ta'ala states: "Call on your Rabb with humility and silently. Verily, He does not love those who transgress the limits." Elsewhere, the Qur'aan says: "Make the Thikr of your Rabb in your heart with humility and silently, and less than jahr, morning and evening. And be not from among the ghaafileen." Imaam Raazi says in the tafseer of Allah's statement: 'Make Thikr of Allah in your heart: i.e. Make Thikr silently (sirran). And the meaning of Allah's statement: 'Doonal jahr bil qaul' (less than jahr) is 'doonal jahril mufrit' (less than excessive loudness. It means that the Thikr should be between mukhaafatah (total silence) and jahr."*

Baihqi in Shu'bul Imaan narrated from Sa'd Bin Maalik the Marfoo' Hadith: *"The best Thikr is (Thikr) Khafi, and the best rizq is that which is sufficient."* In Nihaayah – Sharah Hidaayah it is said: "According to us (i.e.the Ahnaaf) silence in Athkaar is Mustahab except in cases related with announcement such as Athaan and Talbiyah."

Numerous Hanafis (Hanafi Fuqaha) have stated so explicitly (i.e. that Thikr Khafi is Mustahab). It comes in Hidaayah: Verily, *jahr* with Thikr is bid'ah. The *Asal* in Thikr is *Ikhfa'*. The summary is: Even if *jahr* is permissible, *mufrit jahr* is prohibited, and *Sirr* (silent Thikr) is better than even such *jahr* which is not *mufrit*……." *(End of Maulana Abdul Hayy's elaboration).*

This explanation of Hadhrat Maulana Abdul Hayy clarifies the following misrepresentations made by the venerable Mufti Radhaaul Haq Sahib:

(1) His attempt to show that Maulana Abdul Hayy is of the view that loud Thikr is better than silent Thikr. Maulana Abdul Hayy has categorically affirmed the superiority of silent Thikr in the aforementioned exposition.

(2) Both Maulana Abdul Hayy and Imaam Raazi have been cited out of context. Imaam Raazi's tafseer pertaining to 'excessive loudness' is the explanation of the words: *'doonal jahr bil qaul'*. It is unrelated to the earlier part of the aayat, namely: *"Remember your Rabb in your heart with humility and silence."* Imaam Raazi explicitly explains this as *'Sirri Thikr'*. Imaam Raazi's tafseer of the statement, *doonal jahr bil qaul*, is not an argument in favour of superiority for *Thikr jahr*. Both Imaam Raazi and Maulana Abdul Hayy categorically affirm the *Istihbaab* and superiority of *Thikr Khafi.*

(3) The Hadith regarding being branded 'mad', means abundant/excessive Thikr, not loud Thikr. Thus Maulana Abdul Hayy states explicitly: *"In fact, in this Hadith there is no indication for jahri Thikr."*

"It is deducted from this verse that Ikhfa' of Thikr is afdhal. And, this is supported by the Hadith reported by Imaam Ahmad that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"The best Thikr is Khafi." *This is a reproach for the ignorance of the impostor Sufis of our age, for the evils they perpetrate – evil according to the Shariah, intelligence and (even) Urf. Inna lillaahi wa inna ilayhi raajioon."*

There are two distinct issues in this connection: screaming and moderate loud Thikr. It appears that the Mufti Sahib has confused these two issues. He says that this Hadith does not forbid 'loud zikr in general'. Then in his point No.2 above, he says that "loud Thikr was against the general habit of the Sahaba", hence Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) forbade it (loud Thikr). The contradiction and absurdity are self-evident. If loud Thikr was against the general habit of the Sahaabah, why should it be forbidden? What is there to forbid when in fact it was their general and permanent practice to engage in silent Thikr? So what does the Mufti Sahib mean by his averment: *'Loud zikr was forbidden only because it was against the general habit of the Sahaba.'*

Secondly, the venerable Mufti with his averment: *"Loud zikr was forbidden only because it was against the general habit of the Sahaba",* has confirmed that the normal practice of the Sahaabah was *Thikr-e-Khafi.* When he is aware of this irrefutable fact, then what constrains him to propagate his superiority theory – that loud Thikr is better than silent Thikr?

(3) In his third response to objections of critics, the venerable Mufti Sahib says:

"Objection 3: It appears in one narration that "The best zikr is that which is silent." Another Hadith states: "Silent zikr which is not heard by the angels is seventy times more virtuous than zikr which is heard by the angels. This Hadith states that silent zikr is more virtuous than loud zikr."

Responding to this objection, the Mufti Sahib avers: *"Firstly both the Ahaadeeth mentioned are weak narrations as they have been narrated by weak narrators. On the other hand all the Ahaadeeth presented in this kitab thus far are all authentic Ahaadeeth."*

The claim of 'weak' narrations is totally untenable and an insult to the illustrious Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen who cite these very same Ahaadith to affirm the superiority of *Thikr-e-Khafi.*

When *all* the Mufassireen have deemed these narrations sufficiently worthy for further substantiation of the superiority of *Ikhfa'*, then of what worth is the preposterous claim of the Mufti Sahib?

In his Tafseer Kabeer, Imaam Raazi (rahmatullah alayh) presents five proofs for the superiority of *Ikhfa'* (making Thikr and dua silently). Explaining his fourth proof, he says:
"The Fourth Hujjat: It is the Qaul of Rasulullah (alayhis salaam), 'The Dua in silence is the equivalent of 70 duas in alaaniyah' (i.e. in public or loudly – the opposite of sirr)."

The Mufti Sahib in dismissing the worthiness and validity of the '70 fold' Hadith, cited the following version: *"Silent zikr which is not heard by the angels is seventy times more virtuous*

than that zikr which is heard by the angels." Although Imaam Raazi's narration does not mention the angels, it states the 70 times superiority of silent Thikr. Now it devolves on the venerable Mufti Sahib to dismiss as unworthy the Hadith presented by Imaam Raazi (rahmatullah alayh).

Tafseer Ruhul Ma-aani, in affirmation of the superiority of silent Thikr, cites the very same Hadith, namely: *"Between the silent dua and the loud dua there are 70 stages (i.e. the silent dua is 70 times more superior than the loud dua/Thikr)."* Does the honourable Mufti Sahib see his way clear to taking up cudgels with Allaamah Aalusi (rahmatullah alayhi) for having cited this supposedly unworthy Hadith in his tafseer, especially after he has misconstrued Allaamah Aalusi's views to eke out support for his fallacious theory?

Allaamah Aalusi (rahmatullah alayh), also in Ruhul Ma-aani, presents the other allegedly 'weak' and unworthy Hadith, namely: *"The best Thikr is khafi",* in corroboration of the superiority of silent Thikr. He attributes the Hadith to the narration by Imaam Ahmad Ibn Hambal (rahmatullah alayh). Was Allaamah Aalusi (rahmatullah alayh) unaware of the requisite Hadith principle on which the venerable Mufti Sahib justifies the dismissal of this Hadith? The Mufti Sahib has variously quoted Allaaama Aalusi (rahmatullah alayh) in his bid to bolster the 'basis' for collective loud Thikr. He should take cognizance of the Allaamah's views on these Ahaadith as well.

Tafseer Mazhari also presents the Hadith in which silent Thikr is described as 70 times more superior. And, even the Hadith, *"The best Thikr is khafi (Thikr)",* is adduced by Tafseer Mazhari as confirmation of the superiority of silent Thikr/dua.

In Ma-aariful Qur'aan, Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi' (rahmatullah alayh) presenting the 70 fold Hadith, states: *"Hadhrat Hasan Basri (rahmatullah alayh) said that there is superiority of 70 times for silent Thikr and dua over audible Thikr."* Hadhrat Mufti Shafi' also cites the other Hadith to affirm the superiority of silent Thikr – the Hadith which the venerable Mufti Sahib brands 'weak' and dismisses as unworthy for citation. But Hadhrat Mufti Shafi' (rahmatullah alayh) says in Ma-aariful Qur'aan: *"Imaam Ahmad, Ibn Hibbaan, Baihqi and others narrated from Hadhrat Sa'd Bin Abi Waqqaas (radhiyallahu anhu) that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: 'The best Thikr is khafi (Thikr), and the best rizq is that which is sufficient."*

Tafseer Baghawi also cites the 70 fold Hadith in the tafseer of silent dua/Thikr. *"Hasan (i.e. Hadhrat Hasan Basri) narrated that between the audible and silent dua are 70 stages (i.e. the silent dua is 70 times more meritorious than the audible dua)."*

The same Hadith is mentioned in Tafseer Khaazin in the tafseer of silent dua. The 70 fold Hadith mentioning that even the guarding angels are unaware of this silent Thikr is presented also in Tafseerul Hawaari. The Hadith is narrated by Hadhrat Aishah (radhiyallahu anha).

Regarding the Hadith: *'The best Thikr is khafi (Thikr)',* Hadhrat Maulana Abdul Hayy (rahmatullah alayh) says in his *Majmuah Fataawa*: *"Baihqi in Shu'bul Imaan narrates this Hadith mar-fooan from Sa'd Bin Maalik."* (Mar-fooan is a Hadith in which the Chain of narrators links up with Rasulullah – sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Maulana Abdul Hayy presents this Hadith to affirm the superiority of *Thikr-e-Khafi*. He does not assault the Hadith with the epithet of 'weakness' nor does any of the other Mufassireen.

In the light of this mass of evidence for the validity and authenticity of the two Hadith narrations explicitly stating the *afdhaliyyat* of *Thikr-e-Khafi* the attempt of the Mufti Sahib to assail their authenticity is ludicrous.

The strongest proof for the authenticity of these Hadith narrations is the acceptance by the Fuqaha of the Ummah – the Fuqaha-e-Mutaqaddimeen. These narrations fully satisfy the principle of *Talaqqi bil Qubool.* Insha'Allah, this principle which authenticates narrations will be explained further on.

THE FUQAHA-E-MUJTAHIDEEN AND THIKR

The following extracts from the kutub of the Fuqaha are being cited from *Ahsanul Fatawa:*

* "According to us (the Ahnaaf), the Mustahab in *Athkaar* is silence except in such acts which relate to proclamation, e.g. Athaan. Talbiyah, Khutbah. So is it stated in Al-Mabsoot."
* "It is stated in Al-Bahrur Raa-iq: 'Verily, *jahr* with takbeer is bid'ah at all times except on specific occasions (the Days of Tashreeq, etc.)."
* "Qaadhi Khaan has explicitly said is his Fataawa that *Thikr bil jahr* is Makrooh. In Fataawa Alaamiyah it is mentioned: 'The Sufiyah should be prevented from raising the voice and clapping. In Sharhut Tuhfah, Aini has explicitly mentioned it being haraam, and he has castigated what the claimants of Tasawwuf are doing in this regard…….. The *Afdhal* method is *Ikhfa'*
* According to Imaam Maalik and his Ashaab all these acts (of *Thikr bil jahr*) are Makrooh because the Salf (Sahaabah and Taabieen) did not practise it, and to close the avenue of bid'ah so that excess may not be committed in the Deen, and there be no transgressing beyond the confines of the clear Haqq. Verily in this era of ours, has happened what they (the Maaliki Fuaqaha) had feared and abstained from. –*Rasaa-il*
* It is explained in Al-Khulaasah: 'Difference of opinion in the recitation of Takbeer is devoid of substance. There is no prohibition in Thikrullaah at any time. The prohibition applies to the bid'ah method of its execution. Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) said that raising the voice with Thikr is bid'ah because it is in conflict with the command in the aayat:

'And, make the Thikr of Allah in your heart with humility and silently with a voice less than jahr.' Hence, *jahr* will be restricted to occasions (commanded by the Shariah).
* Although this Hadith (one particular Hadith) establishes *Thikr bil jahr*, it is *ghair ma'mool* (not accepted for practical adoption) according to the Jamhoor Hanafi and Shaafi' Fuqaha, for verily, they have explicitly ruled that *jahr* with Thikr after Salaat is not Sunnat. On the contrary it (Sunnat) is *Sirr*. It is said in Nisaabul Ihtisaab: 'It is Makrooh to recite Takbeer audibly after Salaat, and verily it is bid'ah except during the days of Nahr and Tashreeq."……… Ibn Bittaal and others have said that the authorities of the Math-habs are unanimous in the ruling that raising the voice with Thikr is not Mustahab. Imaam Shaafi' (rahmatullah alayh) has explained that that *jahr* was made for a short while, not permanently." – *Rasaa-il*

After presenting *all* narrations pertaining to *Thikr-e-Khafi* and *Thikr-e-Jahri* – narrations in favour of *Thikr-e-Khafi* and narrations which favour as well as oppose *Thikr-e-Jahri*, Hadhrat Mufti Rashid Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh), the Author of Ahsanul Fataawa, states:

Undoubtedly, *Thikr-e-khafi* is *afdhal.* Imaam Maalik and other Fuqaha have restricted the *Jahr* narrations to the specific occasions of the Shariah. In other cases, *jahr* is **haraam.** According to the Fuqaha of the Ahnaaf, besides the specific occasions of the Shariah (when *jahr* is permissible), there are two views pertaining to *jahr:* permissible and haraam……..

In *athkaar* such as Tasbeeh and Tahleel, firstly, there is no need for congregation. Secondly, if occasionally such a gathering has occurred, then what is the need to sit in a 'halqah' (circle)? To interpret *nafs-e-ijtima'* (the mere act of congregating) as a 'circle' is neither intelligent nor is it stated in the dictionaries.

Most of the shurraah (commentators) of Hadith say that ‘halq Thikr’ has a general meaning. Within its scope are the gatherings of knowledge, the gatherings of Thikr, etc…

Generally, the Ambiyaa (alayhimus salaam) did not participate in congregational Thikr. The Muhadditheen and Fuqaha who have mentioned the narrations pertaining to congregational Thikr, did not themselves establish (practically) gatherings of Thikr. In fact, they did not even participate in the Thikr sessions of the Sufiya. They (the Fuqaha) have attributed this practice to only the Sufiya.

For the permissibility of congregational Thikr, the requisite is abstention from bid’aat. Any bid’ah accretion will render the practice haraam. Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas’ood (radhiyallahu anhu) had branded the group of people who had engaged in a specific form of the halqah Thikr *jahran* as bid’atis, He reprimanded and expelled them from the Musjid.

Among the bid’aat pertaining to *Thikr jahr* are:

- To regard *jahr* to be *Mustahab Li-ainihi* (Mustahab *per se*).
- Without any *Awaaridh* (justifying factors) to believe that *Thikr-e-jahr* is superior to *Thikr-e-khafi.*
- To consider gatherings of Thikr to be Mustahab is bid’ah.
- To have an Imaam-Muqtadi relationship between the participants, i.e. one instructs the group to make Thikr , then the rest follow in unision.
- Any type of relationship between the thaakireen (i.e. they should not all together recite in rhythmic form and chorus).
- Making special arrangements to organize Thikr sessions.

- To accord the Thikr sessions the degree of *iltizaam* which is accorded to Faraaidh and Waajibaat, or to criticize one who refrains from it or to believe that he is abandoning a superior act……….*End of Ahsanul Fataawa's discourse.*

In his Musnad, Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) says that he saw in Musjidul Haraam a huge *halqah* (concourse/circle of people). It was a *Halqah of Ilm.* On investigating, he discovered that it was the *Halqah* of Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Al-Haarith Zabeedi (radhiyallahu anhu), who was a Sahaabi. The term *halqah* in the context of the Hadith is not restricted to groups of people engaging in verbal Thikr. The Majaalis of Thikr and the Halqah of Thikr mentioned in the Ahaadith refer to Ilmi gatherings as well. There is no *Qat'iyyat* (Absolute Certitude) for the claim that the Mujaalis and Halaqah necessarily refer to Thikr (i.e. specific verbal Thikr) sessions. It is a well-established fact that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) did not instruct congregational Thikr nor was it the practice of the Sahaabah to engage in such organized congregational Thikr sessions.

With all his flailing in the endeavour to produce 'proof' for the collective loud Thikr performances in the Musaajid, the venerable Mufti has not attempted to claim that such congregational sessions are Sunnah. The *certitude* there exists on the fact that such gatherings are not Sunnah has not permitted the venerable Mufti Sahib to venture such a claim.

The following are extracts from *Fataawa Mahmudiyyah* whose author is Hadhrat Mufti Mahmudul Hasan Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) who happens to be the Shaikh of the honourable Mufti Radhaaul Haq Sahib:

(1) ***Question:*** In the majlis of wa'z (lecture), during occasional pauses, the audience, making a noise (i.e. loudly) recite Durood Shareef. Also after Isha and other Namaaz, the musallis noisily recite Durood Shareef. Is this permissible according to the Shariah?

Answer: Durood Shareef is a dua, and in dua, ***Ikhfa is preferable and afdhal***. The noisy method described in the question is not established in the Shariah. In fact it is baseless and bid'ah.

Should any over-zealous supporter of loud collective Thikr attempt to argue that Hadhrat Mufti Mahmudul Hasan (rahmatullah alayh) described the specific method of noisy recital as baseless and bid'ah, and that he did not label loud collective Thikr as bid'ah, then the response to this argument is: The specific method branded bid'ah should not be utilized as a subterfuge and diversion for our actual claim and for the clear and explicit answer given by Hadhrat Mufti Mahmudul Hasan. The dispute with the venerable Mufti Radhaaul Haq Sahib is the question of superiority of Thikr: Is *Thikr-e-Khafi* superior or *Thikr-e-Jahri*? While it is our contention that *Thikr-e-Khafi* is Mustahab and *afdhal*, the venerable Mufti Sahib has perspired profusely in the redundant exercise to prove that *Thikr-e-Jahr* is Mustahab and *afdhal*. In response to this baseless theory of the venerable Mufti Sahib, Hadhrat Mufti Mahmudul Hasan unambiguously states: *"In Dua the **matloob is Ikhfa which is preferable and afdhal**."*

(Fataawa Mahmudiyyah, Vol. 6)

(2) ***Question:*** How is it during Fajr, after the dua, to stand up, form a halqah (circle) and recite, *Ya Nabi Salaam alaika',* or after the dua to read the Fadhaail?

Answer: "This method of Durood Shareef is not established from the Qur'aan-e-Kareem, the Hadith Shareef, the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam, the Muhadditheen and the other Salf-e-Salihhen. Every person or whoever has the taufeeq, should sit in his position and recite. This will be something of fortune, goodness and barkat. Standing and forming a halqah and reciting in this manner is more ostentatious. Allah Ta'ala loves ikhlaas and accepts it. Ostentatious acts are not loved (by Allah Ta'ala) and are not accepted. After Fajr Namaaz when all the people have completed (their ibaadat), then to read the fadhaail and masaail of the Deen and to teach is excellent and beneficial." (Fataawa Mahmudiyya, Vol 15)

The *halqah* method in public as a regular practice is ostentatious and bid'ah even if the correct Durood formula is recited. The innovated method is the target of criticism and prohibited.

(3) ***Question:*** There is a practice of reciting Durood Shareef *jahran* after Jumuah Namaaz and also in other neighbourhoods this practice is observed. Durood Shareef, Tasbeeh, Tahleel and Takbeer are recited in *Ijtimaai* (congregational) form, *jahran* (audibly). One Faadhil (Aalim) of Deoband explained to me that according to Shaami this practice is not bid'at. This person (the Deobandi Molvi) said by way of objection (i.e. objecting to the claim that it is bid'ah) that the Thikr which Naazim Saahib makes in Mazaahirul Uloom after Asr is a form and a time which he has himself fixed. Why is that not bid'ah? He also says that it has been the practice of the buzrugs of the recent past and now of their khulafa to gather their mureedeen in the Musjid to make *Thikr-e-jali* (audible Thikr). They instruct and exhort their mureedeen to do this. How is this?

(NB This is exactly the methodology of the venerable Mufti Radhaaul Haq Sahib's argumentation. He has argued in similar style in support of loud collective Thikr in the Musaajid.)

Answering this question, Hadhrat Mufti Mahmudul Hasan Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) states in his Fataawa:
"Durood Shareef in both ways – sirran and jahran – is permissible and a medium of spiritual progress and divine proximity. Reciting it (Durood Shareef) on Friday is specifically emphasised. But, to recite it ***jahran in Ijtimaai'*** form (loud collective form) is not substantiated by the Hadith and Fiqh. The Sahaabah Kiraam would congregate five times a day in the Musjid. Besides the Salaat times, they found abundant opportunities to congregate in both *safar* (journey) and *hadhr* (i.e. not on a journey). But, nowhere is it proven that it was their *ma'mool* (practice) to recite ***ijtimaa-an jahran*** (collectively and loudly).

Even if one recites *infiraadan* (alone), then too when reciting audibly, it is necessary to refrain from disturbing anyone. For example, someone may be engaging in performing Salaat or he may be sleeping. Furthermore, there should be no (worldly or nafsaani) motive for reciting audibly. The motive should also not be riya and aggrandizement. The greatest ibaadat is unacceptable if the niyyat is corrupt…………

If in some place there is a practice to recite a fixed number at specicic times, then that will be the *amal of the Mashaaikh*. It will not be *Hujjat-e-Shar'iyyah* (Proof of the Shariah). Following it is not incumbent. However, since the Mashaaikh were followers of the Shariah, their practice should be appropriately interpreted to avoid it being in conflict with the

Shariah and within the confines of bid'ah. The interpretation for this is: ………..

A doctor prescribes a fixed amount of medicine to be taken at fixed times by a patient. This is not a command of ibaadat. It is a remedy based on the experience of the practitioner. Anyone who does not follow this, is not sinful by Allah Ta'ala. If he follows the guidance of the practitioner, he will, Insha'Allah, be cured. The special form of Thikr in which there is a fixed amount and a specific form of *dharb* (striking head movements) is of this category. With changing conditions (of mureedeen), the form of this Thikr too changes. Sometimes, this *jahr and dharb* are completely abandoned. The condition of specific forms of *khatam* is the same." (Fataawa Mahmudiyyah, Vol.15)

The salient aspects in this Fatwa, which should be digested and not overlooked are:

- The *Ijtimaai'* (congregational) form was not the practice of the Sahaabah.
- The *Jahri* method was not the *ma'mool* of the Sahaabah.
- The loud method of the Mashaaikh is a remedy for the mureeds.
- This practice of the Mashaaikh is not a *Hujjat* (Proof) *of the Shariah.*

Hadhrat Mufti Mahmudul Hasan says in his Fataawa: *"Insistence on Mandoob delivers it (the Mandoob) to the confines of Karaahat." (Volume 1)* When there is *israar* (insistence) and *iltizaam* (to make incumbent) on even a Mustahab act, then such act becomes bid'ah notwithstanding its origin in the Sunnah.

AHAADITH AUTHENTICATED BY THE FUQAHA – TALAQQI BIL QUBOOL

Shaikh Yusuf Bin Ismaaeel An-Nibhaani says in his *Hujjatullaah Alal Aalameen:*
"Whoever says that Sunnat is only what is explicitly mentioned in the Ahaadith, has in fact rejected all the Math-habs of the Mujtahideen. He has rejected Ijma'. The evil of his belief is not hidden. We seek protection from Allah Ta'ala (against such deviation). It is mentioned in Al-Yaaqoot wal Jawaahir, and similarly it is narrated in Al-Mizaanul Khadriyyah (of Imaam Sha'raani) that Shaikhul Islam Zakariyya (among the Shaafi' Fuqaha) said: 'Alhamdulillaah, I have searched for the proofs of the Mujtahideen (i.e. for their dalaa-il and mustadallaat). I have not found even a single fara' (a mas'alah which is not a principle) from among the Furoo' of their Mathaahib except that it is substantiated by a daleel, either an Aayat from the Qur'aan or a Hadith or an Athar (statement of a Sahaabi) or Saheeh Qiyaas – based on saheeh principles. ….All their statements are derived from the rays of the Noor of the Shariah which is the foundation. It is impossible to find a fara' (of the Fuqaha) without a basis (in the Qur'aan and Sunnah)."

In this regard, Hafiz Ibn Hajar writes:
"One of the criteria for acceptance of Hadith is the concurrence of the Ulama on making amal (acting) on the Hadith. Such a Hadith (on which there is the concurrence of the Fuqaha) will be incumbently accepted."

In his *Al-Ajwibatul Faadhilah,* Hadhrat Maulana Abdul Hayy, explaining the principle of *Talaqqi Bil Qubool*, says:

"Similarly (will a Hadith be accepted) when the Ummah accepts a *Dhaeef* Hadith. (Ummah in this context does not include the rank and file). According to the authentic view such a Hadith will be acted on. Allaamah Muhaddith Faqeeh Shaikh Husain Bin Muhsin Al-Ansaari Al-Yamaani was asked about the statement of Imaam Tirmizi who says in his Jaami' when he narrates a *Dhaeef* Hadith: "Amal (practical adoption) on it is according to the Ahl-e-Ilm (the Fuqaha)." …….And it was also asked about the established principle on which there is the consensus of the Muhadditheen that anything other than a Saheeh or Hasan Hadith will not be accepted in the matter of (formulating) *ahkaam*. But this Hadith (referring to a particular Hadith) is *Dhaeef*. How is it then permissible for the Ulama to act on it?

The Shaikh said in response: "May Allah grant us and you taufeeq. A *Dhaeef* Hadith is one which lacks a condition from among the conditions of acceptance…..As-Suyuti said in Sharh Nazmid Durar (Al-Nahrul lazi Zakhar): Qubool (Acceptance) is:

(1) What the Ulama have accorded *Talaqqi bil Qubool* (i.e. the Fuqaha have accepted a narration even though there is no *saheeh isnaad* for it. Among the group of Ulama who have narrated this is Ibn Abdul Barr.
(2) Or it (the narration) has become well-known to the Aimmah-e-Hadith. And As-Suyuti has also said after mentioning the Hadith: 'Tirmizi said: 'Amal today is on this Hadith according to the Ulama.' With this statement he indicated that a Hadith is strengthened with the acceptance by the Fuqaha."

As-Suyuti has also said in Tadreebur Raawi: "Some of them (the Authorities) said: 'Hadith will be accorded authenticity when the People (i.e. the Fuqaha) have accepted it as authentic

even if there is no *saheeh isnaad* for it." Ibn Abdul Barr said in Al-Istithkaar when it was narrated from Tirmizi that Bukhaari authenticated the Hadith of the Ocean (that its water is pure), while the Muhadditheen do not accredit this type of *isnaad*. Nevertheless according to me the Hadith is Saheeh because the Ulama have accorded it acceptance."

It is mentioned in At-Tamheed: 'Jaabir narrated from Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam): 'A dinaar is twenty four qeeraat.' About this Hadith, he said: 'In terms of the statement of the Ulama and their Ijma' regarding its meaning, it is independent of *isnaad* (i.e. it is authentic without an isnaad).

Regarding the practice of *Talqeen* to the mayyit (according to the Hambali Math-hab). "A *Dhaeef* Hadith is narrated on this issue. At-Tabraani records in his Mu'jam the Hadith of Abu Umaamah.. …..This Hadith is not substantiated. However, the continuity of practice in this regard in all the lands and ages without any rejection suffices for its practical adoption."

The Hanafi Muhaqqiq, Imaam Al-Kamaal Al-Humaam, says in Fathul Qadeer (about the weakness of a Hadith): "Among the factors which authenticate Hadith is the concurrence of the Ulama on its practice."

Tirmizi said after narrating it: *'Hadithun Ghareebun'. (This Hadith is Ghareeb). But, notwithstanding this, the amal is on it according to the Ulama among the Sahaabah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and others besides them (i.e. the Taabieen, etc.)'.*

Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) said: "The fame of a Hadith in Madinah makes it independent of a *saheeh sanad*. Haafiz As-Sakhaawi says in Fathul Mugeeth: 'When the Ummah

accepts a *Dhaeef* Hadith, then according to the authentic view it will be adopted (for amal). So much so, that it will attain the status of Mutawaatir, and it will abrogate *Maqtoo'* (Ahaadith). It is for this reason that Imaam Shaafi' (rahmatullah alayh) said about (the particular) Hadith: "There is no bequest for an heir", verily, the Muhadditheen have not substantiated it (i.e. it is not authentic in terms of their criteria). Nevertheless, the Ummah has accorded it acceptance for practical adoption. In fact, they (the Fuqaha) have affirmed it to be Naasikh (i.e. it is an abrogater) for the Qur'aanic aayat regarding wasiyyat (bequest)."

Allaamah Saalih Bin Mahdi Al-Muqbeeli said: "Saheeh Hadith in the specific meaning of the Muta-akh-khireen (the later Muhadditheen from about the age of Bukhaari and Muslim), is that which has been narrated by an uprighteous Haafiz who inturn narrates from a similar narrator without a defect. Saheeh Hadith in the general meaning according to the Mutaqaddimeen (the authorities of the early era) among the Muhadditheen, all the Fuqaha and Usooliyyeen, is a narration on which there is practical adoption *(ma'mool bihi)."* Thus, when a Muhaddith among the Muta-akh-khireen says: 'This Hadith is not Saheeh.', then while it negates the special and restricted meaning of the term, it does not negate the general meaning of authenticity according to the Mutaqaddimeen, all the Fuqaha and Usooliyyeen. Therefore, at this juncture there is the possibility of a Hadith being of the *Hasan* or *Dhaeef* or *Ghair Ma'mool* category. On account of this possibility, it is incumbent to probe the Hadith. If it is established that it is *Hasan or Dhaeef Ma'mool bihi* (i.e. it has been practically adopted by the Fuqaha), then it will be accepted. And, if it is *Dhaeef Ghair Ma'mool bihi* (i.e. it has not been adopted for *amal* by the Fuqaha), then it will not be accepted."
(*End of Maulana Abdul Hayy's dissertation.)*

Not a single mas'alah of the Shariah was lost after the demise of Nabi-e-Kareem (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). In the circles of Ilm it is common knowledge that acceptance of a Hadith as a *Mustadal* by the Fuqaha is the *daleel* for the authenticity of that Hadith. Any unbiased person with a little understanding will readily understand that principles formulated two centuries after the age of the Fuqaha-e-Mutaqaddimeen cannot negate the authenticity of the narrations accredited by these illustrious Fuqaha, who flourished in the age of the Sahaabah and in close proximity to their era.

Maulana Abdul Hayy further says: "Shaikh Ibraaheem Ath-Thabrahaiti Maaliki says in Sharhul Arbaeen An-Nawwiyah: 'The occasion for not adopting Dhaeef Hadith in matters of Ahkaam, is when the Fuqaha have not accepted it. If they have accepted it, then it is confirmed, and it (the Dhaeef narration) becomes a proof which shall be practically adopted in matters of ahkaam, etc. as Imaam Shaafi' has said….. *(This effectively debunks Mufti Radhaaul Haq's claim that the relevant Ahaadith cited by the Fuqaha are 'Weak". They are NOT 'weak'. They are solid GOLD.)*

Haafiz Ibn Hajar says in Fathul Baari: "None of the *isnaad* (of narrations) is devoid of some criticism. But on the whole the Hadith has a basis. In fact, Ash-Shaafi' has explicitly stated in Al-Umm that the text of this (Dhaeef) Hadith is *Mutawaatir*…."…….. (Haafiz Bin Hajar commenting on a certain Hadith said): 'Bukhaari said: "It is not Saheeh." The Compilers of the Four Sunan narrated it, and Haakim narrated it from the *tareeq* of Eesa Bin Yoonus. Tirmizi said: 'It is Ghareeb.' We do not recognize it except from the narration of Eesa Bin Yoonus from Hishaam. I (i.e. Imaam Tirmizi) asked Muhammad (i.e. Imaam Bukhaari) about it. He said: ''I do not regard it to be secure (i.e. its sanad).' Ibn Maajah and Haakim

have narrated it from the avenue of Hafs Bin Ghiyaath, and also from Hishaam. Tirmizi said: 'It has been narrated in different ways from Abu Hurairah (radhiyallahu anhu). Its *isnaad* is *not saheeh*.' (However, inspite of all this criticism), the *amal* of the Ulama is on it. (i.e. they have adopted it and the Ummah is practising accordingly)."

(Be it known that the Shariah as we have it today, was transmitted down the long corridor of more than 14 centuries from the Sahaabah. The Shariah did not reach us from Imaam Bukhaari or from any of the other Muhadditheen who appeared centuries after the Sahaabah. Thus the amal of the Fuqaha-e-Mutaqaddimeen override the Hadith classifications of the Muhadditheen. Even if a Hadith is labelled 'weak' by the later Muhadditheen, it has absolutely no effect on a Shar'i hukm which was already Mutawaatir during the age of the Sahaabah and Taabieen.)

Our Ustaadh, Allaamah Shaikh Muhammad Badr-e-Aalam said in the Ta'leeq (Annotation) on the discussion of Imaamul Asr: "I say: …..Verily, the Shaikh does not intend with the aforegoing discussion the abolition of the application of *Isnaad*. How is this possible? If it was not for *Isnaad*, anyone would have said whatever he desired. On the contrary, the Shaikh intends to convey that when a Hadith has become authentic by way of indications and it has become obvious, then to discard it merely on the basis of a *weak narrator is not correct.* How can this be so when continuity of practical adoption of it is a stronger testification for its substantiation according to him?"

And, Shaikh Muhammad Yusuf Binnuri said: "Verily, Shaikh Anwar (Hadhrat Anwar Shah Kasmiri) would say: 'The purpose of *Isnaad* is to ensure that something which is not Deen does not creep into the Deen. The purpose of *Isnaad* is

not to expunge from the Deen what has been substantiated of it by the practice (amal) of the Ahl-e-Isnaad (the Ulama whose Isnaad links up with Rasulullah – sallallahu alayhi wasallam)' "
– *End of Hadhrat Maulana Abdul Hayy's dissertation*

Wakee' Bin Jarraah, the renowned Muhadddith and expert in the field of examining narrators said: *"A Hadith which is in circulation among the Fuqaha is better than a Hadith in circulation among the Shuyookh of Hadith."*
In Shaami it is said: *"When the Mujtahid employs a Hadith as a basis for formulation (of masaail), then (his istidlaal with it) is the accredition of that Hadith."*

In Imdaadul Fataawa, it is mentioned: *"Is the consensus of the Jamhoor not a sign for the Hadith having a strong basis even if the factor of* dhu'f (weakness) *has become attached to it by way of the sanad?"*

In I'laaus Sunan, it is mentioned: *"The fame (shuhrat) of a mas'alah liberates us from (the need) of probing the asaaneed."*

Ainul Hidaayah states: *"Imaam Shaafi' has written in his Risaalah that the Taabieen Ulama had accepted it (referring to a particular Hadith with no proven isnaad) in view of the fact that it was confirmed to them that it was the instruction of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Ibn Abdul Barr said that this instruction (referring to the Hadith in question) is well-known to the Ulama of history and the Fuqaha, hence due to the resemblance with Mutawaatir, there is no need for its isnaad."*

Providing further insight on this issue, Allaamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri explains in Fathul Baari:

"The Muhadditheen (i.e. the later Hadith compilers) take into consideration only the state of the isnaad. They do not consider Ta-aamul (uninterrupted practice from generation to generation initiating from the age of the Sahaabah). Hence, many a time a Hadith is authentic on the basis of their criteria. However, they find that there is no amal on that Saheeh Hadith. This bewilders them. In this regard, Tirmizi narrated in his Jaami' two authentic narrations, valid for practical adoption. Then he commented: 'Verily, no one has adopted it for amal. Inspite of the authenticity of the Isnaad no one is making amal on it.

In the same way the Muhadditheen have classified as Dhaeef a Hadith from the angle of its Isnaad although the Hadith is widely practised on it. (By the Ummah) during their time. (i.e. it was ma'mool bihi). Thus there is a disadvantage from a different angle. It is therefore imperative to consider Ta-aamul along with the isnaad, for verily, the Shariah revolves around Ta-aamul and Tawaaruth." (i.e. the permanent practice from the time of the Sahaabah.)

Another important fact which the venerable Mufti Sahib has overlooked is that these two Hadith narrations which he has attempted to dislodge and neutralize have been presented by the Mufassireen and Fuqaha in a corroboratory capacity. They are not cited as the primary basis – the actual mustadal – for the superiority of silent Thikr. Silent Thikr will remain superior on the basis of the Qur'aanic verses and the permanent practice of the Sahaabah. And, as far as we Muqallideen are concerned, the unanimous ruling of the Fuqaha suffices.

Since the venerable Mufti Sahib has an agenda to fulfil, he felt constrained to promote and elevate the status of loud Thikr and demote silent Thikr. The agenda of the loud collective Thikr

programmes in the Musjid is the guiding and determining factor in the hypothesis of the venerable Mufti Sahib, hence he has failed to discern his conflict with the Sahaabah, Fuqaha and Mufassireen on this issue.

Imaam Jalaluddin Suyuti in Jaamius Sagheer narrating the Hadith: *"The best Thikr is khafi.",* from the Musnad of Imaam Ahmad, The Saheeh of Ibn Hibbaan and Baihqi in Shu'bul Imaaan, says that this Hadith is Saheeh.

Ibn Hibbaan classifies this narration *Saheeh* in his Saheeh. The narrator who narrates from Sa'd Bin Abi Waqqaas (radhiyallahu anhu) is stated in this Hadith as 'Muhammad Bin Abdur Rahmaan Bin Abi Kabshah.

Commenting on the Raawi (narrator), Muhammad Bin Abdur Rahmaan Bin Labeenah, it is mentioned in *Majmauz Zawaaid:* "Ibn Hibbaan has accredited him and said that he has narrated from Sa'd Bin Abi Waqqaas. However, Ibn Maeen has affirmed weakness for him. The remaining narrators are all Saheeh."

In Al-Maqaasidul Hasanah it is mentioned: 'Ibn Hibbaan and Abu Awaanah have authenticated this Hadith (i.e. declared it Saheeh)." By this Chain, this Hadith is Marfoo'. In Ilal Hadith, Abu Zur'ah said the narrator Ibn Abi Labeebah is 'Most Reliable' *(Asahh)*

It is a principle of the science of Hadith that the cumulative effect of a variety of narrations of similar subject matter, but of variant versions in their respective *Isnaad*, eliminates the *dhu'f* (technical weakness), and elevates the Hadith to a status of acceptable authenticity. These two Ahaadith faulted by the venerable Mufti Sahib are too well-known. They are recorded

in numerous kutub of Fiqh, Tafseer and Hadith. Authorities of all branches of Shar'i Knowledge, present these narrations in their arguments to establish the superiority of silent Thikr.

Added to this, is the acceptance of these narrations by the illustrious Fuqaha. This acceptance *(Talaqqi bil Qubool)* is the strongest evidence for the authenticity of these Ahaadith. The fact that the Fuqaha present these Ahaadith as *Mustadallaat* or as corroboration, testifies that their authenticity stems from the era of the Sahaabah.

In the face of the accredition of the Fuqaha, the conflicting classification of the Muhadditheen is devoid of substance in the context of the *Ahkaam* already formulated and finalized during the Khairul Quroon epoch.

There is, therefore, no need to refer to the later Muhadditheen for ascertainment of the status of a Hadith which the Fuqaha had authenticated by utilizing it as their *Mustadal* or for corroborating a fatwa which they had issued. In short, these Ahaadith which the venerable Mufti Sahib has assailed, are **GOLD.**

SUMMARY

The salient features for the authenticity of these two Hadith narrations which confirm the superiority of silent Thikr are:

- The *Jamhoor* Mufassireen of the Qur'aan, all cite these narrations to corroborate the Qur'aanic command of silent Thikr. They further cite these Ahaadith without assailing their *Isnaad.*
- Numerous kutub of Hadith record these two narrations as well as many Ahaadith of similar or identical purport.

- The accumulative effect of the variety of narrations of the same subject matter eliminate the 'weakness' which some Muhadditheen have assigned to the *Isnaad.*
- There is no consenus among the later Muhadditheen on the *dhu'f* (weakness) of these Ahaadith. According to some Muhadditheen, these narrations are *Saheeh.*
- The clinching evidence for the authenticity of these two Ahaadith are the illustrious Fuqaha who cite these narrations in substantiation of *Ahkaam* of the Shariah.
- The actual *hukm* of the *afdhaliyyat* (superiority) of silent Thikr is not based on these narrations. The primary *Mustadal* of the Fuqaha are the two Qur'aanic verses which command silent Thikr.

Reconciliation is of no effect

It is manifestly erroneous to portray silent Thikr as 'permissible' and loud Thikr as 'preferred' as being the original ruling of the Shariah. The opposite is the true position. While silent Thikr is based on Qur'aanic commands and numerous explicit Ahaadith, there is no verse of the Qur'aan which commands or even extols loud Thikr. Likewise with the Ahaadith. There is no Hadith which explicitly states the superiority of loud Thikr. On the contrary, the Ahaadith in general deprecate and derogate loud Thikr. The permissibility of moderate *Thikr bil jahr* is derived by deduction and inference. In addition, the pendulum of rulings for loud Thikr vault wildly from one extreme to the other – from haraam to permissible, with the in between categories of Makrooh and Bid'ah. There are no such discrepancies and incongruencies related to *Thikr-e-Khafi*.

The Argument of Benefits

The venerable Mufti Sahib continuing his endeavour to substantiate his erroneous theory, avers: *"Allamah Munaawi (Rahmatullah alaih) has stated in his kitab Faidhul Qadeer that apart from those times in which loud zikr would disturb others or when one's intentions are not sincere, then loud zikr would be more virtuous than silent zikr. This is so because more benefits result from loud zikr."* Then he enumerates seven benefits.

The venerable Mufti Sahib has failed to understand that *Mansoos Ahkaam* are not subject for change on account of benefits perceived by mortals. The superiority of silent Thikr is a *Mansoos Alayh* practice on which there exists *Ijma'*. Regardless of the benefits of another practice, the *Mansoos* silent Thikr practice may not be tampered with. The minimum classification of silent Thikr is *Istihbaab*, while many authorities claim it to be Waajib and loud Thikr to be bid'ah and haraam.

The benefits even if 100% confirmed, lack Shar'i legality and force for displacing the *hukm* commanded by the Qur'aan and confirmed by the Sunnah. Although the benefits are acknowledged, the Fuqaha and Jamhoor Mufassireen maintain the superiority of *Thikr-e-Khafi*. If benefits and other rationale have to be accepted as valid grounds for effecting change to Shar'i commands, the entire Shariah will disappear as a consequence of the distortion and displacement enacted on the basis of interpretation.

The error of the venerable Mufti Sahib is therefore manifest. Allamah Munaawi's view has to be set aside or reconciled to eliminate the conflict. Allamah Munaawi's opinion cannot

supersede and abrogate the command of the Qur'aan and the original practice of the Sunnah. The personal opinion of Allaamah Munaawi (rahmatullah alayh) who was a follower of the Shaafi' Math-hab, has no status in view of its stark conflict with the explicit Rulings of the Mutaqaddimeen Ahnaaf Fuqaha in general, and with the verdict of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) in particular.

In the attempt to justify the imagined superiority of loud Thikr, the venerable Mufti Sahib has ignored *all* authorities of the Shariah and opted for the view of Allamah Munaawi (rahmatullah alayh) who holds no status in relation to the Mutaqaddimeen Fuqaha.

Another significant factor in the dispute is that the venerable Mufti Sahib has been unable to produce explicit evidence for his personal views regarding collective loud Thikr performances in the Musaajid. He could only manage to cite Qur'aanic verses and Ahaadith which bear no relevance to congregational forms of public Thikr displays. Then he submitted these *Nusoos* to personal interpretations which he obtained from the works of Ulama who came onto the scene many centuries after the Khairul Quroon. He only has the opinions of some Ulama of later time, but no support from the Sahaabah and the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen.

CORRUPTION OF THE HEARTS

Proffering another fallacy for his theory, the venerable Mufti Sahib says: *"The present time is one in which the hearts of people have been overtaken by negligence and hardness, and our thoughts have swayed and become corrupt, and it is in these evil times that not much benefit can be derived from silent*

zikr as can be derived from loud zikr except to the extent that Allah Ta'ala desires."

This is a typical argument of the Ahl-e-Bid'ah whom the venerable Mufti Sahib is emulating in his inordinate zeal for elevating and promoting loud collective Thikr programmes for public display. The contention of the Mufti Sahib is baseless. Any averment which conflicts with the original *Ahkaam* of the Shariah and which aim for their substitution by practices conjured by the minds of men of later times, must incumbently be rejected as bid'ah.

HADHRAT THAANVI'S NASEEHAT

Highlighting the corruption of the *juhala* in relation to the perpetration of bid'ah, Hakimul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

"After every Namaaz or after Fajr and Asr, all the Namaazis collectively and *jahran* (audibly) recite *Lailaha illallaah.* They furthermore, observe this practice with regularity whereas the Buzrugs did not order this practice for all and sundry. It is designed for only special persons. However, the juhala (ignoramuses) have made this practice universal *(aam)* and incumbent. It is for this reason that the Ulama have proclaimed this practice bid'ah. Now they accuse the Ulama of branding Thikrullah as bid'ah.

Although no one may be pleased with the Ulama (on account of their Amr Bil Ma'roof), the Muhaqqiq Sufiya are pleased with them. They appreciate the Ulama. Allaamah Sha'raani (rahmatullah alayh) who was a very great Muhaqqiq Sufi, said that the acts of the Sufiyah are extremely subtle *(Daqeeq)*

which are beyond the comprehension of the masses. Hence, it is incumbent for the masses not to follow the Sufiyah in *Uloom*.

On the contrary, they should follow the Jamhoor Ulama because they (the Ulama) are the supervisors and administrators of the Shariah. In fact, the universe can remain in an orderly state only by following the Ulama………..These Ulama (of the Haqq) are the Guards who protect the Imaan of the masses. If they abandon their office, then the Sufi Sahib will have to abandon his cloisture and execute this duty. Then all his tasawwuf, states and ecstacies will be forgotten.

HADHRAT ABDULLAH IBN MAS'OOD (radhiyallahu anhu) AND THE BID'AH OF HALQAH THIKR

Among the strongest *dalaa-il* (proofs and arguments) in refutation of bid'ah acts such as collective Thikr performances in the Musaajid which appear in the form of ibaadat, is the expulsion of a *halqah zikr* group from the Musjid by the illustrious Sahaabi, Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu).

A group of people engaging in *halqah Thikr* were reciting *Lailaha illallaah, Subhaanallah, Alhamdulillaah and Allahu Akbar* in chorus. They all recited the Thikr loudly and congregationally. Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu), the eminent Sahaabi of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), branded the group as Mubtadieen (bid'atis) and ordered their expulsion from the Musjid.

The action of Hadhrat Abdullah ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) is the strongest and most direct rejection of any superficial act presented in the form of ibaadat. Any act which was not ibaadat to the Salf-e-Saaliheen but presented as ibaadat is bid'ah in the light of the Qur'aan, Sunnah and practice of the Salf-e-Saaliheen.

The type of loud collective Thikr *(Ijtimaa' jahri Thikr)* programmes which have of recent developed in the Musaajid under the aegis of those who are associated with the Deoband School and the Chishti Silsilah, come conspicuously within the scope of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood's condemnation.

The venerable Mufti Sahib has laboured in vain to dismiss the Hadith and action of Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Mas'ood in the attempt to justify the loud collective Thikr performances in the Musaajid. Once Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) was informed of a group of people engaging in a perculiar form of Thikr. The leader of the group instructed his companions to recite *Laa-ilaha illaallaahu* 100 times. Then in chorus the group recited. Then he instructed them to recite *Subhaanallaah, then Allaahu Akbar*, each 100 times. This they did in unison. Meanwhile they were counting the number with pebbles. Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu), addressing them said:

"Use the pebbles to count your sins. I guarantee that none of your virtuous deeds will be destroyed (by counting your sins). Alas! O Ummah of Muhammad! (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). How swiftly have you fallen in ruin! The Sahaabah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) are still numerous in your presence. The garments of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) have not become old and his unbroken utensils are

still present. But you have opened the door of deviation." (Musnad-e-Daarmi)

Allaamah Qaadhi Ibraahim narrates as follows:
"I am Abdullah Bin Mas'ood. I take oath by Him (Allah) besides whom there is no deity. Verily, you have produced a dark bid'ah or you have surpassed the Ashaab of Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).", i.e. in knowledge and practice" (Majaalisul Abraar)

Shaikhul Islam Ibn Daqeeq presents the *riwaayat* as follows: *"I am Ibn Mas'ood. So, whoever knows me, knows who I am. Whoever does not know me, then know that I am Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood. Do you think that you are more guided than Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and his Ashaab? Verily, you have innovated a dark bid'ah, or you have acquired greater status in knowledge than the Ashaab of Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)." Ibn Mas'ood has refuted this act notwithstanding the probability of it coming within the scope of Thikr in general." (Ahkaamul Ahkaam)*

Allaamah Muhammad Bin Muhammad Al-Khawaarzami narrates:
"Thikr bil Jahr is haraam since it has been authentically reported that Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) had expelled a group from the Musjid. They were reciting Tahleel and Durood loudly, and he commented: 'I deem you to be nothing but mubtadieen (bid'atis)." (Shaami)

In sheer desperation, the venerable Mufti Sahib, clutching at straws, first seeks to dismiss the entire Hadith by citing the version of Allaamah Aalusi in Ruhul Ma'aani. He also refers flabbily to some doubts cast by Allaamah Suyuti regarding the narrators of the Hadith. On the basis of these figments of

conjecture, the venerable Mufti Saheb, concludes: "Thus it is clear that these words are not proven to be the words of Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (radhiyallahu anhu)."

Despite his claim of lack of proof, the venerable Mufti Sahib in the very next line inexplicably contradicts himself by saying:

"However, on the other hand we find that these words of Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (Radhiyallahu anhu) are narrated in Sunan-e-Daarmi, Musannaf Abdur Razzaaq and Tabraani, thus how can it be said that these words are not proven to be those of Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (Radhiyallahu anhu)? From the narrations of Sunan-e-Daarmi, Abdur Razzaaq and Tabraani it is proven that this incident (i.e. of the group of people who were occupied in making loud zikr in the Masjid) did take place; however it is not proven from any narration that Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (Radhiyallahu anhu) commanded them to leave the Masjid. Yes, the narrations of Musannaf Abdur Razzaaq Tabraani suggest that Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (Radhiyallahu anhu) commanded them to disperse. However one narrator from amongst the chain of narrators of this Hadith has been omitted. Therefore the fact that Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (Radhiyallahu anhu) made them leave the Masjid is not proven from any authentic narration."

This strange warped argument is bereft of validity. First he maintained that "these words are not proven". Then the Mufti Sahib himself questions this averment, and presents reliable Muhadditheen who have recorded the narrations in this regard. On the basis of the appearance of this narration in Daarmi, Musannaf of Abdur Razzaaq and Tabraani, the venerable Mufti Sahib concedes: *"it is proven that this incident did take place."* Now on what basis does the Mufti Sahib claim that *"this incident did take place"*? Obviously on the basis of the three

reliable Hadith Kutub which he has mentioned. After admitting the proof for the occurrence of this incident, the venerable Mufti Sahib astoundingly claims the expulsion of the group is not proven. If the 'expulsion is not proven, on what basis is the incident proven?

The incident comprises the expulsion as well. If the narration describing the incident is proven, then automatically the expulsion too is proven. The proof for the 'incident' accepted by the venerable Mufti Sahib, is the proof for the expulsion as well.

With regard to the narration in Sunan-e-Daarmi, the venerable Mufti Sahib has committed a grave injustice with his fleeting reference to it, and by a distorted presentation to convey the impression that Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (radhiyallahu anhu) was not annoyed with them nor objected to their bid'ah. The hadith is recorded in Sunan Daarmi as follows:

"Al-Hakam Bin Mubaarak narrated to us that Amr Bin Yahya said: 'I heard my father narrating from his father who said: 'We were seated at the door of Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood before the evening Salaat. When he would come out, we would walk with him to the Musjid. Then (while we were waiting), Abu Musa Ash'ari (A Sahaabi) came and said: 'Has Abu Abdur Rahmaan (i.e. Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood) emerged?' We said: 'No.' Then he sat with us until he (Ibn Mas'ood) came out. When he emerged, we all stood up. Abu Musa said: 'O Aba Abdir Rahmaan! I have just now seen in the Musjid an act which is displeasing to me, (but) Alhamdulillaah, I did not see anything but goodness.' He (Ibn Mas'ud) said: 'And what is that?' Abu Musa said: 'You shall soon see. I saw some groups in the Musjid sitting in a halqah (circle) waiting for the Salaat. In every halqah there is a man, and in their hands are pebbles.

(i.e. in each group-leader's hand is a pebble). He says: 'Recite takbeer 100 times. Then they will recite takbeer 100 times. Then he says: Recite tahleel 100 times. Then they recite tahleel 100 times. Then he says: Recite Tasbeeh 100 times. Then they recite Tasbeeh 100 times.'

Ibn Mas'ood said: 'What did you say to them?' Abu Musa Ash'ari said: 'I said nothing to them in anticipation of your opinion or your command.' Ibn Mas'ood said: 'Why did you not command them to count their sins (with the pebbles), and assure them that their virtues would not be ruined (by counting their sins instead of making Thikr in this way)?'

Then he went and we accompanied him until we came to one of the halqahs. He stood by them and said: 'What is this that I am seeing you do?' They said: 'O Aba Abdillaah! These are pebbles with which we count the takbeer, tahleel and tasbeeh.' Ibn Mas'ood said: 'Then count your sins. I assure you that your good deeds will not be destroyed in the least bit (by counting your sins with the pebbles). Alas, O Ummah of Muhammad! How swiftly have you been ruined? These are the Sahaabah of your Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), who are still numerous among you. These are his clothes which have as yet not become old. These are his utensils which are not yet broken. (By this he indicated the close proximity to the age of Rasulullah – sallallahu alayhi wasallam). I take oath by That Being in Whose Hand is my life! Are you perhaps on a way which is more guided than the Millat of Muhammad? Or have you opened a doorway to deviation (dhalaalah)?' They said: 'Wallaah! O Aba Abdir Rahmaan! We intended nothing but goodness." Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood said: 'There were many who intended goodness which they never attained. Verily, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said to us: "Verily, there will be people who will recite the Qur'aan, but it will not

go beyond their throats." By Allah, I do not know if perhaps most of you are from among them.' Then he turned away from them. Amr Bin Salmah said: 'I saw most of the people of these halqahs fighting against us (the Sahaabah) on the day of the Battle of Nahrawaan with the Khawaarij."

From the slip-shod and sketchy manner in which the venerable Mufti Sahib has presented a shadow of this narration of Sunan Daarmi, the injustice is apparent. The narration emphatically registers the annoyance and criticism voiced by Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) when he beheld the bid'ah halqah Thikr which had been innovated. Hence, he described their act as the opening of the doorway of *dhalaalah* (deviation). While the actual words of expulsion which appear in other versions of this narration in other Hadith kutub, are not to be found in this particular narration of Daarmi, the fatwa of *dhalaalah* is stated emphatically by Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu).

Should it be momentarily assumed that he did not physically expel the bid'atis from the Musjid, which according to the venerable Mufti 'is not proved', then at least the Mufti Sahib should concede that the *'fatwa of dhalaalah'* and his displeasure and other comments of criticism are proved beyond any shadow of doubt.

It is highly improper to refute the expulsion merely because the words describing it do not appear in Daarmi. The expulsion of the innovators is described in narrations appearing in other books of Hadith. There is no valid reason for faulting the claims of expulsion. And, even if the expulsion version is intransigently denied without basis, then too, the fact that the halqah Thikr was branded *'dhalaalah'* by this *Jaleelul Qadr*

Sahaabi should be adequate for the comprehension of every unbiased Mu'min in quest of the Haqq.

Confirming the expulsion of the *halqah group of innovators,* the following is recorded in *Fataawa Bazzaaziyyah:* "It is mentioned in Fataawa Qaadhi that raising the voice with Thikr is haraam. Verily, the narration from Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) is Saheeh (authentic). He had heard a group had congregated in the Musjid. They were reciting Tahleel and Durood on Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) aloud. Then he reprimanded them and said: 'We did not practise this during the age of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). I do not see you but as innovators (mubtadi-een).' He continued repeating this statement until he expelled them from the Musjid."

The venerable Mufti Sahib says: *"Yes, the narrations of Musannaf Abdur Razzaaq and Tabraani suggest that Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu) commanded them to disperse."*

There is no substance in this argument. Assuming that Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) had not expelled the group, but had only ordered them to disperse, in which way would his action serve the cause of the venerable Mufti Sahib? Whether he ordered dispersal or expulsion, the reason for his action is the same. He entered the Musjid and saw the *halqahs* engaging in Thikrullaah. He intervened, stopped them, severely castigated and reprimanded them as all narrations pertaining to this episode confirm. The salient factors in these narrations in Musannaf Abdur Razzaaq as well as in the narrations in the other kutub of Ahaadith, are:

- Do you think that you are more guided than the Ashaab of Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)
- You are hanging on to the tail of dhalaalah (deviation).

- You have innovated a dark bid'ah.
- Have you surpassed in knowledge the Sahaabah of Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)? If you have acted in conflict with the tareeqah of the Sahaabah, then you have gone far, very far astray.

The Hadith in Musannaf Abdur Razzaaq states: *"Then he (Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood) ordered them to disperse."* In this narration there is no 'suggestion' of dispersal as the venerable Mufti Sahib claims. There is an explicit command to break up the *halqahs* and to disperse. Reading this narration in conjunction with other versions which explicitly mention expulsion, it should be obvious that the expulsion was preceded by dispersal of the groups inside the Musjid.

Even on the assumption that they were not expelled, but only dispersed, then too, the conclusion is clear, namely, Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) having branded their specific form of loud *halqah* Thikr as a dark bid'ah, terminated the activity. The participants were ordered to disperse. When at least the break-up of the *halqahs* and the dispersal of the groups are confirmed, then what constrained the Mufti Sahib to say that the narration only 'suggested' dispersal? The sheer desperation in the quest for 'proof' which in reality does not exist culminates in irrationality.

This narration pertaining to the dispersal/expulsion of the innovators is also narrated in *Al-I'tisaam* with an *Isnaad* which varies from the different Chains of Narration mentioned in Musannaf Abdur Razzaaq. The narration in *Al-I'tisaam* reads: *"Abdullah (Ibn Mas'ood) passed by a man in the Musjid who was instructing his companions to recite tasbeeh ten times and tahleel ten times. Then Abdullah said: 'Either you are more guided than the Ashaab of Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi*

wasallam) or you are astray……………Have you been guided to that to which your Nabi was not guided? Verily, you have taken firm hold of the tail of deviation (dhalaalah)."

The following narration also appears in *Al-I'tisaam: "It was mentioned to Abdullah Bin Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) that some people in Kufa were reciting tasbeeh with pebbles in the Musjid. He then approached them. Everyone among them had a heap of pebbles in front of himself. Then he (Ibn Mas'ood) struck them repeatedly with the pebbles until they were expelled from the Musjid, and he said: 'Verily, you have produced a dark bid'ah and you have (conveyed by your actions) that you have superseded the Ashaab of Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in knowledge."*

This narration also appears in the kutub, *Al-Mudkhal, Az-Zuhd Li Ibnil Hambal, Talbees Iblees, etc.*, and has been used by these authorities in refutation of bid'ah. They all have accepted the authenticity of the narration, hence it is presented as a basis for refuting bid'ah and practices which superficially appear as ibaadat.

In another desperate and ludicrous attempt to dislodge these narrations, the Mufti Sahib states: *"However, one narrator from amongst the chain of narrators of this Hadith has been omitted. Therefore the fact that Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (radhiyallahu anhu) made them leave the Masjid is not proven from any authentic narration."*

The Mufti Sahib's claim is baseless. It is absurd to reject the authenticity of the Hadith merely on account of the name of one narrator not being explicitly mentioned in one Hadith. There are other Chains of Narration for this Hadith, which mention all the names of the narrators. In fact, in one *Isnaad*

the person who had directly informed Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) was another senior Sahaabi, namely, Hadhrat Abu Musa Ash'ari (radhiyallahu anhu).

The name of the supposedly 'missing link' is explicitly stated in the Hadith which is recorded in *Hulyatul Auliya* where it is mentioned as follows: *"Qais Bin Abi Haazim and Abuz Za'raa' narrated it from Abdullah Bin Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu). Then Abuz Za'raa', referred to as ' the man' who came to him. Then he said: Musayyib Bin Najeeh came to Abdullah." The full isnaad is: Sulaiman >Ali > Abu Naeem > Sufyaan > Salmah Bin Kuhail > Abuz Za'raa' who said that Musayyib Bin Najeeh came to Abdullah Bin Mas'ood………."* (Hulyatul Auliya)

The claim of the 'unknown' narrator is thus dispelled. And, even if he is unknown, the accumulative effect of the different *Asaaneed* elevates the status of the Hadith.. Furthermore, this Hadith is presented by numerous Authorities of the Shariah in refutation of innovations. It has thus satisfied the criterion of *Talaqqi bil Qubool* which is a principle on the basis of which a narration is authenticated. The accreditation by the Fuqaha validates the Hadith and it is then not reliant on even an *Isnaad for its authenticity.* This principle has already been explained earlier on.

In *Ihkaamul Ahkaam,* the Hadith of Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) is also cited in refutation of bid'ah. The Hadith is accepted as authentic, hence it is said in *Ihkaamul Ahkaam:* "Similarly, is the narration which is reported from Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu), which is recorded by Tabarani in his Mu'jamah with its Sanad from Qais Bin Abi Haazim."

Fataawa Rahimiyyah also presents this Hadith in refutation of Bid'ah. Thus it is mentioned: "It is Mustahab to recite Takbeer along the route to the Eidgah, but not collectively in unison. Since it is not the established method of reciting it, the Fuqaha said that it is not permissible."

In *Ahsanul Fataawa* Hadhrat Mufti Rashid Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh), after narrating the various versions and different *Asaaneed* of the Hadith of Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu), as well as the arguments of those who claim that these narrations are weak or unsubstantiated, says: *"Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu), after branding as mubtadi-een (bid'atis) those who had engaged in loud collective Thikr, and reprimanding them, expelled them from the Musjid."* Commenting further, Hadhrat Mufti Rashid Ahmad said:

"Those who legalize Thikr sessions (loud collective Thikr) have presented three arguments against this narration of Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu):

(i) There is no substantiation for this narration in the books of Hadith.

(ii) This narration is in conflict with other authentic Ahaadith which explicitly permit Thikr bil jahr.

(iii) The group of people (mentioned in the narration) must have added some act of bid'ah, hence they were expelled.

The first argument is incorrect because Tabaraani has narrated it with several *Asaaneed.* Besides this, most of the Fuqaha-e-Kiraam authenticated and validated this narration with the statement: "Verily the narration from Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) is Saheeh."

The second argument is an invalid refutation. (There is no conflict as alleged). Therefore, the third averment is applicable." – *End of Ahsanul Fataawa's comments.*
As far as the authenticity of the narration is concerned, the claims of it being unauthentic are baseless. A synopsis of the discussion on this issue is:

- Many Muhadditheen have narrated the Hadith of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) in their compilations.
- No solid grounds for denouncing the authenticity have been produced. The only flimsy argument presented is that one narrator is 'unknown'. This claim too is devoid of substance as the name of the supposedly unknown narrator is stated in one narration. There has been no serious assault on the *Isnaad.*
- The Hadith is narrated by different Chains. The accumulative effect is the elevation of the status to authenticity.
- The Authorities of the Shariah have utilized this Hadith as a strong basis for criticizing and refuting bid'ah, notably, loud collective Thikr in Musjids.
- The strongest argument in favour of the authenticity of the Hadith is the acceptance of the narration by the Fuqaha. They have utilized this Hadith in substantiation of their Fiqhi rulings. This by itself is the evidence for the authenticity of the Hadith.

Thus, the following appears in Qaadhi Khaan: "Raising the voice with Thikr is haraam. Verily, it has been authentically narrated from Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) that a group of people had gathered.........." Hadhrat Mufti Rashid Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh), Author of Ahsanul Fataawa, states: "Most of the Fuqaha had authenticated the Hadith with the comment:

“Verily, the narration has been authentically narrated from Ibn Mas’ood (radhiyallahu anhu)….”

There is therefore, no scope for the claim that the Hadith of Abdullah Ibn Mas’ood (radhiyallahu anhu) is not authentic.

Ahsanul Fataawa after presenting the aforementioned three arguments tendered in refutation of the narration of Ibn Mas’ood (radhiyallahu anhu), concisely dismissed the arguments as baseless. We have already expanded on the ‘authenticity’ question. Regarding the second argument (mentioned above), the venerable Mufti Radhaaul Haq Sahib states:

“Answer 2: Ulama have stated that even if the Hadith of Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas’ud (radhiyallahu anhu) is proven, it contradicts many other authentic Ahaadeeth of Rasoolullah (Salallahu alaihi wasallam). There are also other narrations of Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas’ud (Radhiyallahu anhu) which contradict this statement of his. For example, Hazrat Abu Waa-il (Radhiyallahu anhu) says: “Some people are of the opinion that Hazrat Abdullah Bin Mas’ood (Radhiyallahu anhu) was not in favour of the practice of loud Thikr, but this was not so……….’ Thus we see that the actions of Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas’ud (Radhiyallahu anhu) contradicts his words, therefore preference would be given to his actions over his words.”

Firstly, the averment, *“Preference would be given to his actions over his words”,* is an incorrect ‘principle’.The principle is the other way around, namely, preference should be given to words over action. For example, a particular action of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) which conflicts with his commands, may not be cited to cancel the commands he has issued. Thus, Rasulullah’s act of allowing Hadhrat Aishah

(radhiyallahu anha) to view the Habshis engaging in a singing performance or his action of not reprimanding a group of females whom he had heard singing, may not be presented as proof for the alleged permissibility of singing and music. These isolated actions of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) cannot be presented in refutation of the mass of Qur'aanic and Hadith evidence – Rasulullah's explicit commands – prohibiting music. There exists valid interpretation for the seemingly contradictory action of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

Similarly, assuming that there is a contradiction between the words and actions of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu), then preference will be given to his explicit words and commands, not to his actions which appear in conflict with the Qur'aanic and Sunnah evidence. His seemingly contradictory action will have to be incumbently reconciled with the clear commands and meanings of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah, as well as with his own teachings and expressions.

Secondly, the claim of contradiction between the words and actions of Hadhrat Abdullah ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) is fictitious. The current dispute is not on the question of loud Thikr being permissible or not permissible. The permissibility of loud Thikr is not refuted. However, the venerable Mufti Sahib has diverted the discussion from the real issue of contention and has dwelt on another uncontested question, namely, permissibility of loud Thikr.

It is glaringly incorrect to say that Ibn Mas'ood's expulsion of the innovators is in conflict with his words and practice of audible Thikr. These are two different issues and different practices. There is no conflict here. Hadhrat Abdullah Bin

Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) condemned, reprimanded and expelled the group, not on the basis of loud Thikr. He expelled them because of the new innovated form of the Thikr – *the halqah form in which they were reciting loudly in chorus.* This was a form which had no origin in the Sunnah, yet it was being given prominence and publicly portrayed as if it was a Masnoon act of ibaadat. If he had not nipped the bid'ah in the bud, the practice would have become entrenched in the Ummah. Citing from *Rasaa-il,* Mufti Rashid Ahmad of Ahsanul Fataawa states: *"If the expulsion from the Musjid was literal, then it is probable that it was on account of their belief that (their new act) was ibaadat, and (on account of) teaching people that it is bid'ah. It is possible for a permissible act to become impermissible because of some accretion."*

In fact, the venerable Mufti Sahib concedes the probability of an accretion which constrained Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) to evict the innovators. Thus, the Mufti Sahib says: *"it was in order to prevent the door of innovation from being opened."* This is precisely the primary reason for the criticism against the current loud collective Thikr programmes being conducted in the Musaajid. If the danger of the door of bid'ah opening existed during the time of even the Sahaabah, hence Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) deemed it appropriate and imperative to resort to the extreme measure of preventing the Thikr programme and expelling the perpetrators from the Musjid, then to a much greater degree does this danger exist in this age.

There is hardly any piety left in people. The venerable Mufti Sahib himself has claimed that the hearts in this era are hardened and spiritually corrupt. *Islaah of the Nafs* (self reformation) has become a closed avenue. Even the so-called sheikhs of today lack understanding and expertise in this

sphere. It is for this reason that we find them staging public Thikr performances as a subterfuge to conceal their gross incompetence and ignorance in this field.

When a senior Mufti fails to understand the simple mas'alah of the superiority of silent Thikr being a unanimous ruling of the Authorities of the Ummah since the age of the Sahaabah, and he labours painfully to elevate a permissible act of lower degree to a status above the Masnoon act, then the bid'ah dimension is conspicuous.

No one can accuse Hadhrat Ibn Masood (radhiyallahu anhu) of preventing Thikrullaah. Obviously this was not the purpose of the expulsion. He was preventing a bid'ah gaining a foothold in the community. When he did not prevent Thikrullah, the question is: What did he prevent? And, why did he expel 'thaakireen' from the Musjid? Only prejudice clouds the mind rendering it incapable of understanding such a simple issue. The expulsion was not because they were engaging in Thikrullaah. The action was on account of the bid'ah method which they had introduced.

There is therefore no conflict between Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood's words and actions. His action was to prevent the door of bid'ah opening, not to prevent any type of Thikr which is lawful.

Presenting another legless and fallacious argument, the venerable Mufti Sahib says: *"The narration of Sunan-e-Daarmi suggests that the people who were making loud zikr in the Masjid belonged to a deviated sect and their only intention was to initiate an innovation amongst Muslims."*

At the juncture when this episode had transpired there was absolutely no suggestion of them belonging to a deviate sect.

The Mufti Sahib says: *"their only intention was to initiate an innovation"*. Now what was that act which was an innovation which those people had initiated? Was it their Salaat or their Qiraa't? What exactly was that act which even the Mufti Sahib says is 'an innovation'? Which act did Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) brand as a dark bid'ah? The act of bid'ah for which they were castigated and expelled was their loud collective Thikr in the Musjid. This is the precise reason for the desire in this era to prevent people from staging public performance of Thikr practices which have neither origin nor sanction in the Sunnah.

From whichever angle the practice of the deviates is viewed, even the Mufti Sahib is constrained to concede that their act of public, loud collective Thikr in the Musjid was bid'ah.

What the Mufti Sahib says is that it is not proper for even a Sahaabi to classify as an innovation an action which is proven on the basis of the Qur'aan and Ahaadeeth. This line of argument is ludicrous.

There is no Sahaabi who ever branded any such proven act or teaching of the Shariah as innovation. It is quite probable that a Sahaabi was unaware of something which another Sahaabi attributed to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), and on the basis of his unawareness he may have labelled the act bid'ah. Giving an example of his contention, the Mufti Sahib says: *"Similarly Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mughaffal (Radhiyallahu anhu) has said that to recite Bismillah aloud in Salaah is an innovation, but this very act is Sunnah to Imaam Shafi'ee (Rahmatullah alayh)."*

This is an extremely poor example proffered for the grave and ludicrous charge of a Sahaabi possibly having labelled as

bid'ah an act which is proven by the Qur'aan and Ahaadith. The Mufti Sahib has made this contention in a weird attempt to show that Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood's prevention and expulsion of the group of bid'ati thaakireen were in conflict with the Qur'aan and Ahaadith in view of the fact that these two primary sources of the Shariah ordain, exhort and emphasise the importance and significance of Thikrullaah. This attempt is untenable in terms of the principles of the Shariah. It is also despicable and lamentable. There is absolutely no justification for entertaining such a suspicion with regard to Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) or any other Sahaabi. All the examples of Sahaabah conflicting with the Qur'aan and Sunnah, which the Mufti Sahib presents are highly erroneous and ludicrous.

The Mufti Sahib in having resorted to this type of confused argument in his quest for evidence to substantiate the collective loud Thikr performances, has belittled the lofty rank of the Sahaabah.

The Sahaabi, Hadhrat Mughaffal (radhiyallahu anhu) cannot be indicted of holding a view in conflict with the Qur'aan and Sunnah. The probability of error is greater in the Shaafi' viewpoint than the view of the Sahaabi. Each Math-hab has its own respective arguments. A Sahaabi's lofty status entitled him to brand a practice bid'ah even if such practice is valid in the view of other Sahaabah. The venerable Mufti Sahib has clearly been unable to understand the basis of Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Mughaffal's pronouncement of bid'ah, and on the basis of this lack of understanding he entertains the idea that this Sahaabi had erred in saying that reciting Bismillah aloud in Salaat is bid'ah. However, the great Akaabir Ulama have not understood the issue in this manner. They accepted and endorsed Hadhrat Ibn Mughaffal's view. Thus, Allaamah Khalil Ahmad Ambetwi

states in his *Baraahin-e-Qaatiah* in refutation of the Ahl-e-Bid'ah who regard unsubstantiated practices as beautiful (Mustahsan) and even superior (Afdhal): " *The Sahaabi, Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mughaffal, labelled as bid'ah and rejected loud recitation of Bismillah together with Surah Faatihah in Salaat inspite of Bismillah being a Thikr, and jahr with Thikr is not prohibited. However, since jahr has not been narrated (in the Hadith) at this juncture (of Surah Faatihah during Salaat), he branded it bid'ah. This Hadith is narrated in Tirmizi and other Hadith kutub. According to Imaam Abu Hanifah, reciting Takbeer aloud along the route to the Eidgah on the Day of Fitr is bid'ah because according to him silent recitation of the Takbir is substantiated at this juncture. Hence jahr (reciting aloud) at a juncture unsubstantiated by the Shariah is bid'ah despite jahr with Takbeer and Thikr being mustahsan."*

Elaborating on the Hadith of Hadhrat Ibn Mughaffal (radhiyallahu anhu), it appears in *I'laaus Sunan:* "The Hadith indicates that abstention from *jahr* with Bismillah according to them (the great body of Sahaabah and Taabieen) was the inheritance from their Nabi, which their later generations inherited from those before them. This by itself is sufficient for this mas'alah…."

The venerable Mufti Sahib has not conducted himself honourably in citing the statement of Hadhrat Ibn Mughaffal (radhiyallahu anhu), He has attempted to convey the impression of this being an isolated view (i.e. reciting Bismillaah aloud before Surah Faatihah is bid'ah) of a Sahaabi being in conflict with the Qur'aan and Ahaadith. Hence, he presented Ibn Mughaffal's proclamation of bid'ah as an issue devoid of substance which is unsustainable.

This attempt is a grave injustice committed by the Mufti Sahib. In view of this misrepresentation, there is a need to present some elucidation on this mas'alah so that Hadhrat Ibn Mughaffal's statement is viewed and understood in proper perspective.

The full text of the Hadith is: *"Ibn Abdullah Bin Mughaffal narrated: 'While I was in Salaat, my father heard me reciting 'Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem'. He then exclaimed: 'O my son! 'You are innovating. Beware of bid'ah!' He (Abdullah) said: 'I have not seen any of the Ashaab of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) abhorring innovation in Islam more than him (my father).' He said: 'I have performed Salaat with Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), with Abu Bakr, Umar and with Uthmaan, but I had not heard anyone of them saying it (i.e. reciting Bismillaah audibly). Therefore, do not say it. When you perform Salaat, then say: 'Alhamdulillaah Rabbil Aalameen.' "*

Ikramah narrated from Ibn Abbaas who said regarding reciting Bismillaah aloud: 'That is the act of the A'raab' (the simple and ignorant village dwellers).' Tahaawi narrated it, and its Isnaad is Hasan – Aathaarus Sunan (I'laaus Sunan)

Hadhrat Ibn Mughaffal (radhiyallahu anhu) had proclaimed this act bid'ah on the basis of strong *dalaa-il.* It was not an isolated, weak view of an unknown Sahaabi. It is highly improper for the Mufti Sahib to attempt to dismiss Ibn Mughaffal's bid'ah proclamation with Imaam Shaafi's view. If according to Imaam Shaafi' (rahmatullah alayh) reciting Tasmiah audibly is 'Sunnah', it does not detract from the validity of Hadhrat Ibn Mughaffal's fatwa of bid'ah, and that is the fatwa which is the view of the Ahnaaf, and which should be the view of the

venerable Mufti Sahib whom we understand is a follower of the Hanafi Math-hab.

Commenting on his own hypothesis, the Mufti Sahib says: *"From this we learn that an action does not become an innovation merely because a certain Sahaabi classified it as such."*

The other examples which the Mufti Sahib presented to substantiate his hypothesis also suffer the same fate as his misconceived illustration with the Hadith of Hadhrat Ibn Mughaffal (radhiyallahu anhu). In another similar misconceived example to denigrate the classification of a Sahaabi, the Mufti Sahib says: *"For example, Hazrat Ibn Umar (Radhiyallahu anhu) said that Salaatut Dhuhaa is an innovation, whereas it is infact Mustahab."* In terms of the Mufti Sahib's baseless hypothesis, the logic here is: There is consensus that Salaatut Dhuhaa is Sunnat/Mustahab. Despite this, the Sahaabi Abdullah Bin Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) classified it as bid'ah. The inference to be drawn from this line of reasoning is: An act is not bid'ah merely because a Sahaabi branded it bid'ah. The conclusion: Thus, Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Masood's classification of the group of thaakireen as being innovators is incorrect. Their act of loud collective Thikr in the Musjid is not bid'ah despite Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood's classification and his action of expelling them from the Musjid.

"It is in Bukhaari that Hadhrat Ibn Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) seeing people performing Salaatut Dhuhaa in the Musjid, said that this is bid'ah wheras Salaatut Dhuha is Sunnat and Mustahab, and going to the Musjid is also Mustahab. But, because this Salaat was not to be performed collectively in the Musjid, he branded it bid'ah, and he refuted it."

It is significant that Hadhrat Allaamah Khalil presented Hadhrat Ibn Umar's action in refutation of bid'ah whereas the venerable Mufti Sahib portrays it as an error – the error of classifying a Sunnat as innovation. But, in view of the Mufti Sahib's desperate quest for 'dalaa-il' to bolster the current loud collective Thikr performances in the Musaajid, he felt constrained to derogate even the fataawa of senior Sahaabah.
"In a similar manner, Hazrat Abu Malik Ashja'i (Radhiyallahu anhu) says that according to his father, to recite Qunoot in the Fajr Salaah is an innovation. This is also a Sunnah act according to Imaam Shaafi'ee (Rahmatullah alaihi)."

The views of the Sahaabah are all based on valid Shar'i *dalaa-il.* Their views were not products of their whimsical imagination.

It should be well understood that a bid'ah can be constituted of several perfectly lawful acts of ibaadat. These acts taken individually will be highly meritorious. However, when given a collective form, the ruling applicable to the accumulation or to the whole new act will differ. Hadhrat Allaamah Khalil Ahmad states in *Baraahin-e-Qaatiah:*

"If the form of the collective action is haraam, then the ruling pertaining to the collection (of acts) will change even if all the individual acts are permissible."

In the loud collective Thikr performances, the following acts are all permissible if done individually:
Thikrullaah, moderate jahr in privacy, non-Sunnah athkaar prescribed by the Mashaaikh. and Tilaawat of the Qur'aan. However, if these acts are combined in a collective form in a public performance in the Musjid, then the whole collection will be classified as bid'ah in the same way as Hadhrat

Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) had branded the loud collective Thikr performance in the Musjid bid'ah, and in the way Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) classified the public performance of Salaatut Dhuhaa as bid'ah.

DEFINING BID'AH

Defining *Bid'ah*, the venerable Mufti Sahib says:
"According to Allamah Shaami (Rahmatullah alaih) and Allamah Ibn Nujaim (Rahmatullah alaih), an innovation is a new act which is derived from the teachings or actions of Rasoolullah (Sallallahu alaihi wasallam)."

This definition is incorrect. An act derived from the teachings or action of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is Sunnah, not bid'ah. Further explaining bid'ah, the Mufti Sahib correctly observes: "...to increase the status of any Mustahab or permissible act by regarding it as compulsory is innovation."

It is for this reason that Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) would dissociate from even the *Mubah* moulood practice of his illustrious Shaikh, Hadhrat Haji Imdaadullah (rahmatullah alayh).

There is much admonition of the Akaabir, which could be presented regarding the undesirability of the 'highly desirable' practices which the Mufti Sahib has postulated in his endeavour to justify the bid'ah of the public performances of loud collective Thikr. In this regard, the following salutary principle stated by Hadhrat Allaamah Khalil Ambethwi (rahmatullah alayh) should be borne in mind when deciding the issue of the 'highly desirable' permissible practices advocated by the Mufti Sahib. Hadhrat Allaamah Khalil Ahmed says in his *Baraahin-e-Qaatiah:*

"A Mubah (permissible) act, in fact a Mandoob (Mustahab/Sunnat) act becomes bid'ah and unlawful because of iltizaam (making it incumbent), hence even the Ta-aamul (regular practice) of the Mutaqaddimeen (on the Mubah/Mandoob) act is not hujjat (proof)."

RASULULLAH'S ABSTENTION

The 'delicacy' of Lizards?

If the Mufti Sahib had, in devotion and over-brimming love for Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) ventured to say that it is highly desirable to consume marrow (a kind of pumpkin), then this view would have been respected, honoured and accepted despite it being classified as a *Sunnat-e-Aadiyyah*, the observance of which is not emphasised nor discardence deprecated.

Siyaam-e-Daawood (alayhis salaam)

The Mufti Sahib's prattle about an imaginary 'fifth' principle is a diversion for lack of *dalaa-il.*

The Sahaabah condemned a man who had organized a feast to celebrate the circumcision of his child. They tendered as the basis of their criticism the 'principle' of abstention.

Ijtimaai' (collective) dua (also known as Faatiha-e-Thaani) after the Sunnat and Nafl Salaat has been branded bid'ah by the Ulama on the basis of abstention by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the Sahaabah.

It is incorrect to posit the 'abstention of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)' as a non-existing 'proof'. No one has even tried to project such abstention as a fifth *Daleel* of the Shariah.

For example, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) abstained from performing Salaatudh Dhuhaa in jamaa't; there was abstention from Athaan and Iqaamah for Eid Salaat; he abstained from adding a fourth raka't to the three raka'ts of Maghrib; he abstained from making four raka'ts for Fajr; he abstained from collective dua after the Sunnats and Nafl Salaat; he abstained from making Dua after Janaazah Salaat; and he abstained from many other acts.

If collective tilaawat of the Qur'aan Shareef on the third day or seventh day after the death of a person is a bid'ah custom, then what is the difference between this bid'ah and the loud collective Thikr programmes which are being incumbently practised in the Musaajid?

In fact, a sufi sheikh sahib sends his agents around the country to rope in unwary and ignorant people for organizing such Thikr customs in the Musaajid. He treads the path of the Bareilwi Qabar Pujaaris.

If a Bareilwi practises a custom which has been promoted to the status of incumbent ibaadat or the idea of incumbency is conveyed, then we say that it is Bid'ah. Why should we not pass the same ruling if the perpetrator happens to be a Deobandi? When the evil garland of bid'ah is donned, the Deobandi designation vanishes automatically. A bid'ati cannot be a Deobandi regardless of him having acquired any knowledge at an institution affiliated with the Deobandi School.

The Mufti Sahib's condonation of the new loud collective Thikr custom is just as 'valid' as the Bareilwi Bid'ati's defence of moulood, urs, and their khatam ceremonies. This type of 'validity' is the hallmark of confused thinking which in turn is

the effect of divergence from the Sunnah. Collective loud Thikr practices are divergence from the Sunnah. These are customs which are in conflict with the Sunnah. There is no doubt in the bid'ah of these public displays of 'ibaadat'.

Benefits

Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) understood the 'benefits' better than our understanding and the Mufti's understanding of the 'benefits'. However, notwithstanding the 'benefits' he expelled the group of bid'atis from the Musjid.

Loud Takbeer

The Mufti Sahib in a further flabby, in fact baseless attempt to justify the new bid'ah of loud collective Thikr in the public, says: *"When Hazrat Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallahu anhu) and Hazrat Ibn Umar (Radhiyallahu anhu) went about the bazaars reciting Takbeer in a loud voice during the days of Haj, it was not regarded as an innovation because they did not regard this as being part of the Sharee'ah"*
If the Hanafi Math-hab has issued a ruling on a mas'alah and such ruling happens to be the accepted view of the *Jamhoor Ahnaaf Fuqaha,* then the Mufti Sahib will be in grievous error to produce Ahaadith or to cite another Mujtahid Imaam to dislodge the official Ruling of the Math-hab.

Bearing this in mind, the Mufti Sahib is aware that according to the Hanafi Math-hab it is not permissible to wander around the bazaars loudly proclaiming Takbeer on Eid days or on any other day. Imaam Abu Hanifah's fatwa on this issue is unequivocal. The Mufti Sahib is also aware that the rulings of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) are based on the

Qur'aan and Ahaadith, hence there is no question of conflict with the Sunnah.

If another Imaam has utilized this Hadith as the basis of his view, he (the Mujtahid Imaam) had that right. But, in this belated epoch, a muqallid Mufti has no right to present a Hadith to support his personal view which conflicts with the Math-hab he follows.

If the Hadith which he has cited is to be accepted as a valid basis of his loud collective Thikr programmes, then by the same token the Hadith will be valid to dislodge the view of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) on his view of prohibition of loud Takbeer in the bazaars.

The honourable Mufti Sahib would have acquitted himself honourably if he had operated within the ambit of the principles and rulings of the Ahnaaf Fuqaha instead of trespassing the limits of the Math-hab to fish for proofs in the Ahaadith for which the Muqallid Mufti lacks the credentials and qualifications, especially when his whimsical opinion clashes with the Dalaa-il and Ruling of his Mujtahid Imaam – Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) in this case.

While the *amal* of these two Sahaabis is never bid'ah, we, the Muqallideen of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh), do not follow this *amal*. We are not in need of any *dalaa-il* to vindicate the *amal* of our Math-hab. Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) and the other Hanafi Fuqaha, took well care of that department many, many centuries ago. Thus the Hadith depicting the *amal* of the two Sahaabah is not a basis for arguing permissibility for the loud collective Thikr public performances.

The venerable Mufti Sahib has also displayed a flair for inconsistent and selective citation of Ahaadith. If the Hadith of acertain Sahaabi appears to support his view, he will present it as evidence. But if another Hadith of the same Sahaabi contradicts his opinion, he will relegate it to oblivion. Thus, we observe him presenting the Hadith of Hadhrat Ibn Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) pertaining to Takbeer in substantiation of the loud collective Thikr practices. However, Hadhrat Ibn Umar's prohibition of public performance of Salaatudh Dhuha is conveniently ignored.

'Love' and 'Rectification' do not legitimize Bid'ah

The venerable Mufti Sahib has resorted to weird arguments in his zealous endeavour to justify the bid'ah of collective loud Thikr in the Musaajid. Presenting one more sample of this type of untenable arguments, he mentions that "a certain Sahaabi always read Surah Ikhlaas after reciting Surah Faatiha in every Salaah." When "some people" had complained, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) upheld the Sahaabi's practice. Commenting on this particular Sahaabi's practice, the venerable Mufti Sahib, concludes:
"This narration opens a vast door of valuable knowledge for us, i.e. if we regard any act that was not practiced upon by Rasoolullah (Sallallahu alaihi wasallam) as Sunnah then it is innovation; but if we practice on it for the sake of rectification or out of love then it will not be an innovation."

Commenting on this issue, Hakimul Ummah Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) said:
"A Mufti should possess qualification in the Qur'aan, Hadith, Fiqah and Tasawwuf. Then, Insha'Allah Ta'ala, he will adhere to the prescribed limits. When he is not fully qualified, then he

will surely commit some confusion. Hence, it is not jaa-iz for an aashiq (one who is overwhelmed by divine love) to be a Mufti. Since he is overwhelmed by love, he desires to follow Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in every action regardless of whether such ittiba' (following) will cast others into fitnah. In contrast, a Faqeeh is not concerned with this attitude. He will unhesitatingly proclaim the fatwa that if by following an act of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) there is the danger of corruption for the masses, then such following is in reality not ittiba' of the Sunnah. It is merely a superficial claim of following, hence it will be prohibited."

But, the venerable Mufti Sahib has erred in promoting a practice in which there is not even a vestige of Sunnat which could be attributed to love for the Rasool (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

The Mufti Sahib has framed a principle in his aforementioned averment, which has no validity. Rasulullah's abstention from an act does not necessarily negate the Sunnah status of a practice.

Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) said: "A mubah, in fact even a Mustahab act sometimes becomes prohibited in view of the accretion of prohibited acts, for example, it is Mustahab, in fact Sunnat, to answer an invitation. However, if any act in conflict with the Shariah will be perpetrated at the venue of the invitation, then it is forbidden to attend." This principle is explained in almost all kutub of Fiqah, and is not hidden from the Ulama.

Furthermore, this Hadith pertaining to the fixation of a particular Surah during Salaat has no relationship with the innovated collective loud Thikr programme. The recitation of

Surah Ikhlaas by the Sahaabi was his personal *amal.* It was not a public performance or a collective display of Thikr by a group in the Musjid.

Bid'ah and Sunnah

The cause *(sabab)* for these innovations existed, and is not a new development. For example, the reason for meelaad functions is happiness on account of the birth of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Despite this *sabab* having existed during the age of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), neither did he nor the Sahaabah organize meelaad functions. Did the intelligence of the Sahaabah not comprehend this (i.e. the supposed need for meelaad to express happiness), *Nauthubillaah!*

But when the *sabab* had existed among them, then why did Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the Sahaabah not organize meelaad functions? The *raison d'etre (sabab)* for Thikr is old *(qadeem).* It is not a new development. It existed par excellence among the Sahaabah. The very motive which underlies Thikrullah in this age, had existed in the age of the Sahaabah. The reason for Thikrullah is to gain the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. This was the very reason for the Thikrullaah of the Sahaabah too, yet they did not organize such loud Thikr programmes.

The Talbiyah and extra words

Thus he says: *"It has been reported that Hazrat Ibn Umar (Radiyallahu anhu) used to add a few extra words in the*

Talbiyah of Haj, This was not done with the intention of Sunnah therefore it was not regarded as an innovation."

This mas'alah is explained in *Badaai-us Sanaai'* as follows: *"If one adds to the Talbiyah, then it will be Mustahab according to us (the Ahnaaf)……..The daleel for this is the narration from a Jamaa't (a whole group) of Sahaabah. They would add to the Talbiyah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)."*

Imaam Bukhaari's practice

The venerable Mufti Sahib also attempts to find support for the Thikr programmes by reference to Imaam Bukhaari's practice of taking ghusl and performing two raka'ts Salaat before committing a Hadith to writing. In terms of the Mufti Sahib's logic, this practice of Imaam Bukhaari (rahmatullah alayh) is a basis for justifying the collective loud Thikr performances in the Musaajid. He complements this 'basis of justification' with Imaam Abu Hanifah's practice of performing Fajr Salaat with the Isha wudhu. The weirdness of this logic should be self-evident.

These are personal acts of ibaadat which were never offered for public consumption nor promoted from the public platform, nor were people roped in to participate in these strictly personal acts of ibaadat executed in solitude and privacy.

There is no danger of such private acts of ibaadat developing into bid'ah.

FURTHER DISCUSSION ON RASULULLAH'S ABSTENTION

Some acts from which Nabi-e-Kareem (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had abstained are permissible whereas other acts of abstention are not permissible.

True love for Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is inextricably interwoven with *Ittiba'* – complete obedience and following the Sunnah in the light of the understanding of the Sahaabah.

What is the difference between the two acts of Abstention? For us Muqallideen of Imaam A'zam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) who are unable to display plumes of *Ijtihaad*, the answer is simple, brief and devoid of headaches. The Muqallid may not traverse beyond the parameters of the rulings of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen of whom he purports to be a subordinate. Since our Fuqaha have not branded as bid'ah 300 raka'ts nor predicated any *Karaahat* to it, we can safely state that in this example bid'ah is not involved despite the abstention of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

Furthermore, the validity of an abundance of Nafl Salaat *(alal itlaaq)* is confirmed by the Ahaadith and corroborated by the *Ta-aamul* of the Salf-e-Saliheen of the Khairul Quroon era.

Thus, when Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) says: *"Raising the voice in the Musjid is haraam even with Thikr",* then we are expected to say: We hear and we submit! The plethora of interpretations of the much-later mufassireen and Sufiya are of no value in the process of formulating Ahkaam, if such interpretations conflict with the basic Ruling of our Imaam. The

Rulings of the Fuqaha are imperative and of fundamental importance in matters relating to *Ahkaam*, not the interpretations of other authorities who have no standing in relation to the Fuqaha-e-Mutaqaddimeen who were the first Link after the Sahaabah in the Chain of Ilm and Taqwa which connects the Ulama with Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

ASTONISHING NAIVETY – FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THE ACTION OF IBN MAS'OOD (radhiyallahu anhu)

The venerable Mufti Sahib displays astonishing naivety by saying: *"The Hadith of Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (Radiyallahu anhu) was for the sake of caution and to close the door of innovation so that the general masses do not regard this act as a compulsory action of the Masjid and regard this specific manner of making zikr as Sunnah."*

If there was a need *"to close the door of innovation"* during even the era of the Sahaabah, is there then no such need in our age in which there is a glut and preponderance of bid'ah accompanied by despicable motives of riya, ujub and takabbur? In this age of proximity to Qiyaamah, in this era of *sharr, fisq, fujoor, bid'ah, jahaalat* and *kufr* all reigning supreme in the Ummah, by what stretch of credulity could it be surmised that there is no need to close the door of innovation? When such a need had existed even during the *Khairul Quroon* era, how could it not exist today in this age of *jahaalat* in which 90% of the Ummah do not uphold even Salaat, the most vital Pillar of practical Islam? Bid'ah is rife all around us, yet the venerable Mufti Sahib concedes the need for closing the avenue of innovation during the time of the Sahaabah, while he fails to discern such a need in this age of indescribable fitnah and jahaalat.

Besides the issue of *Sadd-e-Baab* (closing the avenue), which is mere opinion, Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) expelled them after branding them *'Mubtadieen'* (innovators). He drew the attention of the group to the *amal* of

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the Sahaabah. He highlighted the conflict of the collective loud Thikr with the ibaadat acts of the Sahaabah. In other words, he branded their very act, *per se,* as a dark bid'ah.

The Mufti Sahib further alleges: *"But after the masses were made aware of this, this practice was permitted."* Where was it permitted; by whom was it permitted, and when? This is a blatant claim without a *daleel.* Seeking to shroud this claim with a haze of confusion, the Mufti Sahib says: *"There are many examples of this nature found in the Sharee'ah, a few of which are: * Rasoolullah (Sallallahu alaihiu wasallam) initially prohibited the Sahaba from visiting the graveyard, but thereafter permitted it."*

Both the prohibition and permission are *Mansoos.* But what is the *Nass* for Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood's alleged later permission to conduct the collective loud Thikr performance in the Musjid? Down the long corridor of almost fourteen centuries, the Ulama who have been combating Bid'ah, have always quoted this narration of Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) as one of their prime evidences in refutation of bid'ah. Nowhere is it mentioned that he had permitted this practice "after the masses were made aware".

The venerable Mufti Sahib has also misunderstood the purport of the prohibition and the later permission of visiting the Quboor. The permission granted to visit the graves was an abrogation of the earlier order, and this later permission was announced by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) who had every right as the Rasool to issue orders of abrogation which he did under Divine guidance and command. His later permission rescinded the earlier prohibition. When Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) criticized and expelled the group of Bid'atis, he was not introducing any new *Hukm* which would

be abrogated later on. Bid'ah is haraam for all time. The very act of the group Thikr was bid'ah, hence he prohibited it. He could not later rescind the prohibition because in the light of his Ijtihaad, the very act of their form of Thikr was bid'ah. He could not later permit it nor did he permit it.

There is therefore no abrogation which followed the banning while in the case of ziyaarat-e-quboor, both the prohibition and permission were acts of Shaari' (alayhis salaam). The difference is stark and as clear as daylight.

In so far as the collective loud Thikr practice is concerned, it is unlawful from the very outset. It is a bid'ah from its very inception. There is no precedent for this type of public collective ibaadat in the *Khairul Quroon* era. On the contrary, we find only criticism for it. Thus, the principle of suspension and later reinstatement which applies to Mubah and Mustahab actions may not be applied to unlawful acts.
In his endeavour to hammer out support for the bid'ah Thikr programmes, the Mufti Sahib has presented more than a dozen actions of suspension and later reinstatement of the practices. However, none of these could be a basis of permissibility for the bid'ah of public collective Thikr.

If an act was at one stage prohibited by Allah Ta'ala or His Rasool, and later allowed, cancelling the prohibition, then the cancellation is abrogation *(Naskh)* which is the right of only *Shaari' (alayhis salaam).* This right cannot be arrogated by anyone else. The principle of temporary suspension may be applied to only lawful acts (mubah or mustahab acts), not to new customs and practices manufactured fourteen centuries after the advent of *Risaalat.*

But this practice cannot be utilized as a basis for transference of its original permissibility to the collective loud Thikr public performance, for the simple reason that the former is upheld in the Sunnah while the latter has no sanction in the Sunnah. It is a new invention presented in the form of ibaadat which is bid'ah from the very inception.

The Mufti Sahib in another misdirected example states: *"According to Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Abbaas (Radiyallahu anhu) a person who intentionally kills another will remain in Jahannum forever. This he said for the sake of warning…"*

Hadhrat Ibn Abbaas (radhiyallahu anhu) had every right to hold this view. He was a Mujtahid in his own right, and his understanding of the Qur'aan was perfect. There is no need for the Mufti Sahib's interpretation.

THE FOUR SILSILAHS

The venerable Mufti Saheb contends: *"If we were to practice on the Hadith of Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (Radiyallahu anhu), then every action practiced by the four Silsilahs in the Masaajid will fall under the category of innovation, but no one holds this view."*

This conclusion is indeed preposterous and most unbefitting a Man of Knowledge. Firstly, the Mufti Sahib is aware that *Dalaa-il* are acquired from the Four Sources of the Shariah. The 'four silsilahs' do not form part of the Four Sources of Shar'i Law. The practices, prescriptions and remedies of the Four Silsilahs are not proof in the Shariah. The prescriptions of the Four Silsilahs are private issues confined to the khaanqah (the spiritual hospital). The Mashaaikh themselves state with clarity that their prescriptions are remedies, not acts of Masnoon ibaadat.

The actions and verdicts of the Sahaabah are basis in the Shariah. The actions of the Four Silsilahs do not enjoy this status. The actions, practices and fataawa of the Sahaabah, especially the Fuqaha among the Sahaabah, may not be subordinated to the peculiar non-Sunnah practices of the Four Silsilah. This is self-evident, and requires no dilatory exposition.

THE EID TAKBEER – FURTHER DISCUSSION

In another serious impropriety, the venerable Mufti Sahib says: *"In our present times, the Takbeer of Eid is recited aloud after the Fajr Salaah until sunrise,in the Holy Haram of Makkah and*

every person present also recites Takbeer. None of the Ulama regard this as undesirable even though it falls under the category of innovation according to the narration of Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (Raddiyallahu anhu)."

Did the venerable Mufti Sahib make an intelligent and a proper survey of the Ulama of the world to ascertain if *all* the Ulama are in agreement with the bid'ah which takes place in the Holy Haram at Makkah? On what basis does the Mufti Sahib make this sweeping arbitrary claim that "none of the Ulama regard this practice as undesirable"?

The practices of Saudi Arabia do not constitute *Shar'i daleel.* This notion is baseless. If the Mufti Sahib is perhaps not aware of the Ahnaaf masaa-il pertaining to Takbeer-e-Tashreeq, he should be apprized that reciting the Takbeer loudly at the venue of the Eid Salaat is bid'ah on both Eids. This is the unanimous ruling of the Hanafi Math-hab. It is therefore, not permissible for followers of the Hanafi Math-hab to join the crowd in the bid'ah of loud Takbeer.

DEROGATION OF HADHRAT ABDULLAH IBN MAS'OOD

In his floundering attempts to 'prove' the validity of collective loud Thikr public performances, the venerable Mufti Sahib loses his mental eqilibrium, hence he resorted to denigrating even the ibaadat practices of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu). In derogation of this eminent, most senior Sahaabi, the Mufti Sahib states: *"….but it would not be correct to regard everything that Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (Radiyallahu anhu) said as law. For example, Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (Radiyallahu anhu) whilst performing Salaah used to strike his hands and thereafter placed them between his thighs whilst in ruku', saying that this was the practice of Rasoolullah (Sallallahu alihi wasallam); but this practice has been abrogated."*

The Mufti Sahib presents another three examples of Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood's practices which 'are not law' according to him (the Mufti).

Firstly, it is highly disrespectful for a muqallid mufti in this belated century – 14 centuries after the Sahaabah – to insinuate that Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) was unaware of the 'law', and that his practices of ibaadat cannot be relied on. Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) was a Mujtahid of the highest calibre among the Sahaabah Fuqaha.

If certain practices of Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) are not part of our Math-hab, this cannot be cited as a *daleel* to refute the narration in which it is reported that he had expelled the Bid'atis from the Musjid. The Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen, had

set aside certain practices of some Sahaabah on the basis of solid *dalaa-il* acquired from the narrations of Sahaabah, not on the basis of opinion.

It is improper and in conflict with the demands of Knowledge to dismiss one Hadith of a Sahaabi on the basis that another Hadith pertaining to another practice has not been accepted.

It is thus, incongruous for the Mufti Sahib to argue that Hadhrat Ibn Masood's narration on the expulsion of the bid'atis is to be rejected on the basis of his practice of 'striking his hands' not having been accepted for *amal* by our Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen of the Hanafi Math-hab.

No one has ever contended that every view and practice of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu ahu) forms part of the Hanafi Math-hab which we follow. It is furthermore, stupid to reject one view of a Sahaabi simply because another view related to another mas'alah was not accepted by the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen. Such issues were decided by the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen on the basis of solid Shar'i evidences, not whimsical opinion as the Mufti Sahib has displayed.

The Mufti Sahib proceeding with his fallacious arguments, says: *"The prohibition of Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (Radiyallahu anhu) regarding the gathering in the Masjid can be likened to the prohibition of Hazrat Abu Zarr (Radiyallahu anhu) regarding the hoarding of wealth. In a like manner Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (Radiyallahu anhu) did not like to see such an act being practiced in the Masjid which would later on be regarded as Sunnah."*

The one does not constitute a basis for the other as the Mufti Sahib has abortively attempted to peddle.

THIKR-E-MUFRID AND DHARB

However, these practices are not Masnoon acts of ibaadat, and have to be confined to privacy. They are not to be performed for the public gallery in the Musaajid where there is a real danger of them developing into bid'ah.

THE KHAANQAH THIKR PROGRAMMES

The Mufti Sahib has also endeavoured and laboured to forge a basis of permissibility for his public Thikr peformances by offering the Khaanqah practices of some of our Akaabireen. Among the several Khaanqahs he has mentioned, the reference to Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) is noteworthy and requires some explanation. Describing the 'loud Thikr' in Hadhrat Thaanvi's Khaanqah, the Mufti Sahib says: *"During the time of Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thaanwi (Rahmatullah alaih), it was a practice that after Fajr Salaah the people remained in the Masjid till after sunrise. Some were occupied in reading their Wazeefah's, others recited the Glorious Qur'an and others made loud zikr. After sunrise Maddarash would commence.*

It was a personal practice of Hazrat Thaanwi (Rahmatullah alaih) to make loud zikr after Tahajjud Salaah. He was also joined by Hazrat Khwaajah Sahib and other great personalities. Never did Hazrat Thaanwi (Rahmatullah alaih) prevent this."

Furthermore, the practices of the khaanqah cannot override the rulings of the Shariah. What happpened in the khaanqah does not confer *afdhaliyyat (superiority and greater merit)* to *Thikr bil Jahr*. The Khaanqah practices cannot demote the primary

Thikr-e-Khafi to a secondary status. *Thikr-e-Khafi* has been accorded *afdhaliyyat* by the Qur'aan, Sunnah and the explicit rulings of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen. It is the official stance of the Hanafi Math-hab.

The khaanqah practices on the other hand, are essentially private practices introduced as a temporary measure for the acquisition of certain spiritual benefits. These benefits do not alter the ruling of the Shariah as propounded by the Math-hab we follow.

It will be salutary for the venerable Mufti Sahib, to digest what Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) had instructed regarding the public Thikr performances in the Musaajid. One of the khulafa of Hadhrat Thaanwi (rahmatullah alayh), wrote to him:
"This year some associates (mureedeen) complained of separation. Some of them were of the opinion that when I am not present with them, then the thaakireen and shaaghileen (those who engage in Thikr and shaghl) should assemble once a week in one place, for example on Friday night, and engage in Thikr, fikr and shaghl so that ghaflat is eliminated. I considered this to be good, hence since two or three weeks I intentionally gathered them. I narrate some naseehat to them, while the greater part of the night is spent in Thikr and shaghl. Even though a circle was not formed, the effects of *thauq, shauq and muhabbat* (pleasure, eagerness and love) were experienced in this congregational form. I have therefore emphasised and instructed that this Thikr and shaghl programme be always observed weekly, and the whole night be spent in a Musjid. Although I have not discerned any bid'ah in this, nevertheless, since no instruction was given for such an observance, there is some agitation in my heart. Will this not perhaps develop into an evil practice?"

* Hakimul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali (rahmatullah alayh), succinctly forbidding this collective Thikr programme, instructed his khalifah:

“Most certainly there is this danger (of bid’ah) for the future. Whatever Thikr and shaghl you wish to make alone, do so. This is quite possible. The arrangement for Ijtima’ (collectivity, gathering) should be terminated.” (Tarbiyatus Saalik)

Whoever attempts to cite Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) in support of public collective loud Thikr performances, is guilty of perpetrating deception and renders a grave injustice to Hakimul Ummah who was meticulous and ever diligent in closing the avenue of bid’ah. Earlier in this treatise, we have presented the unambiguous views of Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) on the bid’ah practice of collective loud Thikr performances.

The private Thikr practices which were enacted in the privacy of the khaanqah should not be cited as a basis for legitimizing the bid’ah public Thikr performances in the Musaajid. The aforementioned directive which Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) issued to his khalifah amply illustrates Hakimul Ummat’s attitude and view regarding the public Thikr performances.

THE CONFUSION OF THE MUFTI SAHIB

The theme of the Mufti Sahib’s booklet is confusion. This confusion may be intentional or unintentional. Since the Mufti

Sahib's actual aim is to strike a Shar'i basis for the collective loud Thikr performances conducted in the Musaajid, the first step in this process was to prove the permissibility of loud Thikr. Then on this basis he believed that the bid'ah Thikr programmes in the Musaajid could be passed off as valid Shar'i practices of ibaadat. With this end in view, the Mufti Sahib set out from the beginning of his discussion to the end, providing copious references to 'prove' the *jawaaz* (permissibility) of loud Thikr.

JAHR-E-MUFRIT (excessive loudness – shouting)

By 'loud' is generally meant *jahr-e-mufrit* (excessive loudness) which is the inevitable and ultimate result of all unsubstantiated, non-Masnoon forms of collective Thikr practices. Testifying to the excessive loudness of such programmes, even the Mufti sahib states:

They chanted in response to the melodious rythmic tune of the chorus. The chanting of the khaanqah people is no 'daleel' for permissibility. Leave alone the washer men and their raucous chanting, let us examine the other ingredients and effects of this *jahr-e-mufrit Thikr* of the khaanqah. Irrespective of the repositories of this collective Thikr being our Akaabireen, their action has to be scaled on the Standard of the Shariah.

The Mufti Sahib has all along contended that the prohibition announced by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) as well as the Fuqaha pertains to *jahr-e-mufrit* (excessive loudness), and this is in fact the contention of all the authorities of the Shariah. *Jahr-e-Mufrit* is unanimously haraam. There is no difference of opinion on this issue. Even our honourable Mufti Sahib who so dishonourably embarked on his treatise of confusion, concedes that *jahr-e-mufrit* is not permissible.

We implore the Mufti Sahib to view the khaanqah Thikr objectively with a clear mind, denuded of the cobwebs of bias and vindictiveness. What type of *jahr* produces vibration of even the walls of the Musjid and khaanqah? What type of *jahr* leads to the walls echoing? Permissible Audible Thikr *(Thikr bil Jahr)* aside, is it permissible to scream, shout and constrain the walls to vibrate and echo with Thikr? Is this not the *jahr-e-mufrit* which Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) forbade the Sahaabah from when they were loudly reciting Takbeer and Tahleel while ascending and descending a mountain? Is this not the type of Thikr which all authorities without a single exception – including the Khaanqah Mashaaikh – say is haraam and bid'ah?

The Thikr which caused the walls to vibrate and echo – is undoubtedly haraam, bid'ah *jahr-e-mufrit* – the *hurmat* of which is *Ijmaai'* (unanimous).

If the venerable Mufti Sahib responds that no one was disturbed by this *jahr-e-mufrit* since the khaanqah and the Musjid were private venues, not public places of a cosmopolitan character, then it will be a concession of what we are saying, namely, the khaanqah Thikr programmes are strictly speaking private affairs and practices intended for the spiritual patients in the spiritual hospital (the khaanqah). Spiritual remedies, even haraam *jahr-e-mufrit* is sometimes administered to patients in an advanced stage of disease. If no halaal remedy is available for such patients, then *Tadaawee bil haraam* (medical treatment with haraam) is a well established and known principle in Fiqh. It could, in fact is, also applied in the spiritual realm for mureedeen suffering from spiritual ailments.

Jahr-e-Mufrit is unanimously not permissible for even individuals in the privacy of their homes. We hold extremely

high opinions of our Mashaaikh since we too are of the Chishti stock.

From the aforementioned explanation it should be quite evident that it is highly improper to proffer the *jahr-e-mufrit*, which is unanimously haraam, as a *daleel* for the permissibility of the collective loud Thikr performances conducted in the public Musaajid which are not khaanqah Musjids nor khaanqahs nor the preserves of any particular buzroog whose Silsilah holds sway.

The khaanqah practices do not feature anywhere in the process of formulation of *Ahkaam.*It does not behove a Mufti to present khaanqah practices as *Mustadallaat* (basis of deductioon) for issuing Fataaawa on Shar'i issues. The venerable Mufti Sahib has laboured arduously and abortively in his attempt to convince the unwary ones that the illustrious Fuqaha had erred in using the Hadith of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) as a *Mustadal* (basis for their ruling of prohibition). But, without hesitation he tenders the peculiar practices of the khaanqah as his *'mustadal'* for legitimizing the bid'ah collective loud Thikr performances. The emphatic views of Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) have already been mentioned earlier.

MAULANA ABDUL HAYY

The venerable Mufti Sahib has also endeavoured to compound the confusion, intentionally or unintentionally, by selective citation or citing statements out of context. Consider his statement: *"Hazrat Moulana Abdul Hay Lakhnowi (Rahmatullah alaih) has explained this verse in detail in his kitab Sabaahatul Fikr Fil Jahri Biz Zikr. A summary of his discussion is given hereunder…."* In the summary is mentioned

the prohibition of excessive loudness and screaming when making Thikr.

(1) "The meaning of the word 'khair' in Rasulullah's statement: *'Khairuth Thikr al-khafi' (The best Thikr is silent Thikr)',* is that in *Thikr-e-Khafi* there is greater goodness, and in *jahr*, there is less goodness."
Yet, throughout his discussion, the Mufti Sahib has been abortively at pains to 'prove' the superiority of *Thikr-e-jahr.*

(2) "In this Hadith is a daleel for the permissibility of Thikr bil jahr. Undoubtedly, it is established in the Shariah. But, *Khafi Thikr is afdhal (superior)."*
This too, debunks the Mufti Sahib's claim of the *afdhaliyyat* of *Thikr bil jahr.*'

(3) Further explaining the rulings pertaining to Thikr, Maulana Abdul Hayy (rahmatullah alayh) says: *"Verily, there is no doubt in that Sirr (silent Thikr) is superior to jahr (audible Thikr) because of the humility and concealment. Similarly, there is no doubt in the fact that jahr-e-mufrit is prohibited by virtue of the Hadith: 'Have mercy on yourselves…"* Citing from *An-Nihaayah,* he states: *"According to us (Ahnaaf) Silence in Athkaar is Mustahab except in special cases of announcement, e.g. Athaan, Talbiyah, Khutbah as mentioned in Al-Mabsoot."*

Continuing his exposition, Maulana Abdul Hayy says: *"It is obvious that the meaning of those who say "Jahr is haraam", is jahr-e-mufrit……..and those who say that it (jahr) is bid'ah, mean thereby a special form of execution and to make incumbent what the Shariah has not made incumbent……."*

The collective loud Thikr form which the Mufti Sahib advocates, comes within the scope of this prohibition. It is both haraam and bid'ah.

(4) "Yes, *Al-Jahrul Mufrit* is prohibited by the Shariah. Similarly (is prohibited) such *jahr which is not mufrit* when it distresses anyone who is asleep or who performs Salaat or is accompanied by a vestige of riya, or is accompanied by factors which are in conflict with the Shariah or is regarded as being incumbent. Many are the permissible things which became Makrooh because of *iltizaam* (making incumbent), as Ali Qaari has explicitly mentioned in Sharhul Mishkaat, and Al-Haskafi in Ad-Durrul Mukhtaar."

When there are a number of conditions regulating even the permissibility of *Thikr ghair mufrit,* how does the venerable Mufti Sahib reconcile with all this, the *jahr-e-mufrit* which causes khaanqah and Musjid walls to vbirate and echo throughout the greater part of the night enchanting even the washermen?

(5) "This (Hadith, viz. the best Thikr is the silent Thikr) does not indicate that audible Thikr is prohibited. On the contrary, it indicates the *afdhaliyyat* of silent Thikr. And, there is no dispute in this."

While asserting the permissibility of audible Thikr, Maulana Abdul Hayy unambiguously affirms the superiority of silent Thikr. He further adds that there is no contention – no dispute – in this fact, viz., that silent Thikr is superior. But, the venerable Mufti Sahib has ploughed all his academic energy into the indefensible task of 'proving' that audible Thikr is superior.

IMAAM ABU HANIFAH (RAHMATULLAH ALAYH)

Commenting on the imagined view of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh), the venerable Mufti Sahib, avers: "In Ruhul Ma'ani Allamah Aloosi (Rahmatullah alaih) has said: "Imaam Abu Hanifa (Rahmatullah alaih) has given preference to loud zikr."

Even if this averment does appear in Ruhul Ma'aani, we must unequivocally say that it is a blatant falsity attributed to Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh). If Allaamah Aloosi (rahmatullah alayh) has indeed made this erroneous attribution, it should be set aside and some suitable interpretation accorded to it.

Ruhul Ma'aani cannot be presented in opposition to and in refutation of the Works of Fiqah such as *Al-Mabsoot* of Imaam Sarakhsi and *Badaaius Sanaa'* of Allaamah Kaasaani. Ruhul Ma'anai has no status in relation to the kutub of the illustrious Fuqaha who are the chief exponents of the Shariah. Allaamah Kaasaani (rahmatullah alayh) says in *Badaaius Sanaa':* "According to Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh), raising the voice with Takbeer is actually bid'ah because it is Thikr, and the Sunnah in Athkaar is silence by virtue of the statement (aayat) of Allah Ta'ala: *'Call unto your Rabb in humility and silence.',* and by virtue of Rasulullah's statement, *'The best dua is the silent (dua).'*And also because it (silent Thikr) is closer to humility and respect, and furthest from riya. Thus, this original principle will not be abandoned except when there is a determinant."

Beides *Badaaius Sanaai'* all the kutub of Fiqah uniformly state Imaam Abu Hanifah's view of prohibition. Now whether the

prohibition stated by Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) applies to *jahr-e-mufrit* or even *jahr ghair mufrit*, the conclusion that he "gave preference to loud Thikr" is manifestly baseless and has been wrongly attributed to Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh).

Dismissing the false attribution to Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh), Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya (rahmatullah alayh), says in *Aujazul Masaalik:*

"Some people have said that there is no *karaahat* in it (i.e. in raising the voice in the Musjid). They say that Abu Hanifah is among them. Al-Qaari (Mullah Ali Qaari) said that the attribution of the negation of *mutlaq karaahah to Imaam A'zam is a blatantly false attribution to him because his Math-hab is the prohibition of raising the voice in the Musjid even with Thikr."*

FATHUL QADEER

The Mufti Sahib states: *"In Fathul Qadeer under the commentary of this Hadith it is stated: 'From the above Hadith and similar others it becomes clear that there is absolutely no aversion in the methods adopted by the Soofis in hosting gatherings of loud zikr in the Masaajid in which the kalmia Laa-ilaaha illalla is recited aloud."*

The Mufti Sahib has omitted to apprize readers of the principle pertaining to Thikr which the author of *Fathul Qadeer,* Allaamah Ibnul Humaam (rahmatullah alayh) stated with emphasis in the same kitaab. Explaining the principle, he says in *Fathul Qadeer:*

"The principle in athkaar is Ikhfa', and jahr with it is bid'ah."

Now when this is the primary principle regulating Thikr, which Allaamah Ibn Humaam (rahmatullah alayh) emphatically states, the aforementioned claim attributed to him appears preposterous. The claim of loud Thikr in the Musaajid by 'soofis' is an erroneous attribution to Allaamah Humaam (rahmatullah alayh). The Mufti Sahib appears to have erred somewhere along the trajectory. There is no such statement in *Fathul Qadeer.*

RUHUL MA'AANI

The Mufti Sahib also cites Allaamah Aalusi (rahmatullah alayh) as a *daleel* for his case. At most, the Mufti Sahib is able to extract the permissibility of audible Thikr from the views of Allaamah Aalusi (rahmatullah alayh). As far as the collective loud Thikr displays in the Musaajid are concerned, the Mufti sahib has conveniently overlooked the following comment of Allaamah Aalusi (rahmatullah alayh), also in Ruhul Ma'aani:

"You will observe numerous people of your time shouting in dua especially in the Jaami' Musaajid so much so that the noise becomes great and the ears are deafened while they do not know that they have gathered two acts of bid'ah: raising the voice in dua and doing that in the Musjid."

HAASHIYAH TAHTAAWI

The Mufti Sahib, citing this kitaab states: *"According to Haashiyatut Tahtaawi Alaa Maraaqil Al-Falaah it is not a prohibition to make loud zikr in the Masaajid as Allah Ta'ala says: "And who can be more oppressive than him who prevents the name of Allah Ta'ala from being mentioned in the Houses of Allah Ta'ala." The Ulama have unanimously agreed that it*

is preferable to host gatherings of zikr in the Masaajid as well as out of the Masaajid, except in the case when making loud zikr would disturb a person who is sleeping, or performing Salaah or reciting the Holy Qur'an."

Our response to these comments is as follows:
(1) The claim of unanimity of the Ulama of the Salf and Khalaf on the *Istihbaab* (preferability) of loud Thikr gatherings is misleading and baseless. There is no such unanimity. If there had existed this alleged unanimity, there would not have been this severe difference prevailing in our ranks in this age as well as in previous ages.

(2) The only 'proof' which the thirteenth century Allaamah Tahtaawi adduces is the unsubstantiated arbitrary claim of the 10th century Allaamah Sha'raani (rahmatullah alayh). Since Allaamah Sha'raani (rahmatullah alayh) was a follower of the Shaafi' Math-hab, he must have been referring to Shaafi' Ulama. However, the Ahnaaf are not subordinate to the rulings of the Shaafi' Ulama.

(3) The very principle of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh), viz., the *"Asal in Athkaar is Ikhfa' and raising the voice with Thikr is bid'ah",* refutes the alleged unanimity on the permissibility, in fact *Istihbaab,* of collective loud Thikr in the Musaajid. The action of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu), expelling the group who had engaged in this form of Thikr in the Musjid, also debunks the claim of unanimity postulated by Allaamah Sha'raani (rahmatullah alayh).

(4) The views stated in Haashiyah Tahtaawi cannot override the verdicts of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu),

Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh), Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) and innumerable other Fuqaha.

QAADHI KHAAN AND BAZZAAZIYYAH

(a) Allaamah Al-Kurduri (rahmatullah alayh), the author of Fataawa Bazzaaziyyah, was an Aalim of note of the 8th century Hijri. The author of Fataawa Qaadhi Khaan was a notable Aalim of the 7th century.

(b) Any view of these noble Ulama who appeared many centuries after *Khairul Quroon,* which conflicts with the *Usool and Juziyaat* of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen, especially Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) and his Ashaab, may not be presented as a basis for abrogating the unambiguous and well-known and well-established Fataawa of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen.

(c) The correct methodology to adopt when tackling such conflicts, is to present an interpretation which reconciles the conflicting views of the later Ulama with the Fataawa of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen. It should not be the other way around which countenances such interpretations which render the verdicts of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen subordinate and subservient to the views and practices of the Khaanqah Sufiya and of such Ulama who are caught up in environments in which such questionable practices predominate.

This *Thikr bil jahr* quagmire is so perplexing that Maulana Abdul Hayy (rahmatullah alayh), after recording the array of differences and interpretations on this issue, dejectingly states in his *Sabaahatul Fikr: "These are the views of our Ashaab. Just look at the manner in which their opinions clash (and differ). Some among them say that it (mutlaq jahr) is*

permissible; some say that it is haraam; some say that it is bid'ah; some say that it is Makrooh. The Asah (most authentic) is that it is permissible as long as it does not transgress the limits. This view (of permissibility) has been adopted by Al-Khairul Ramali."

His 'rationale' for this convenient expurgation of Maulana Abdul Hayy's comment is understandable. After all, the Mufti Sahib is in the arduous and unenviable quest of *'dalaa-il'* to fabricate a non-existent 'consensus' on a non-issue for structuring a valid basis for his pet collective loud Thikr programmes offered for the consumption of the public in the Musaajid and perhaps elsewhere.

There is also no expediency to justify and defend the Khaanqah practices in a way which produces a clash with the verdicts of the Fuqaha-e-Mutaqaddimeen who were the highest Repositories of the Shariah after the Sahaaba-e-Kiraam (ridhwaanullaahi alayhim) nor is there a need for the proponents on the other side of the divide to criticize such practices. The permissibility of the Khaanqah practices is derived from another source and structured on another basis which is unrelated to Imaam Abu Hanifah's *Asal* circumscribing *Thikr-e-jahr.* By stating the Shariah's ruling on the acts of *jahr and khafi,* the intention is not to decry and outlaw the Khaanqah practices of the Auliya and the Mashaaikh whom we all follow and emulate, and of whose Spiritual Tree we all are branches.

As for the public acts of collective loud Thikr in the Musaajid, the following principles are imperative for the obtainal of a Shar'i Ruling:

- Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Masood's action

- Imaam Abu Hanifa's Principle
- Imaam Maalik's categorical claim that the Sahaabah and Taabieen did not adhere to such collectivism and populism
- The principle of *Sadd-e-Baab and Sadd-e-Tharaai'* (Closing the Avenue of corruption and blocking all means which create bid'ah)
- The explicit statements of our Akaabireen as opposed to their Khaanqah practices.

(h) If an appropriate interpretation for reconciling the conflict with the principle of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen is not forthcoming, then the alternative is to set aside the view of Bazzaaziyyah and Qaadhi Khaan so that adherence to the verdict of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen is affirmed.

(i) There is a well-known principle in Fiqah: *"When the arguments are conflicting, then both fall away."* In the light of this principle, the conflicting statements in Qaadi Khaan fall away, and *amal* on the verdict of Imaam Abu Hanifah is automatically affirmed.

(j) There is also another well-known principle: *"When there develops a probability (of another view), then the istidlaal (deduction) is null and void."* The *jahr-e-mufrit* interpretation of Fataawa Khairiyyah, and the Mufti Sahib's own personal opinion which he presented as an addendum to the *ta'weel* of Fataawa Khairiyyah, are not the effects of *Nass.* Since these interpretations are not corroborated by Wahi, the probability of error is overwhelming. In fact, these interpretations which compromise the *Asal* of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) are fallacious. In view of the probability of gross error, the *istidlaal* of the Mufti Sahib is *baatil.*

(k) The venerable Mufti Sahib has extracted selectively certain statements from Bazzaaziyyah and Qaadhi Khaan, which he opined served the cause of promoting the collective loud Thikr programmes in the Musaajid. Apart from the fact that the statements cited by the Mufti Sahib have no bearing on the bid'ah *Ijtimaai' Thikr* performances since these cited views pertain to only permissibility of audible Thikr for individuals, the Mufti Sahib has perpetrated chicanery in his selective citation. Honour demands that the full text or the other view also expounded by the same authority from which support is drawn, be presented. But the Mufti Sahib's manner of selectivity is tantamount to *Kitmaanul Haqq (Concealment of the Truth).*

The Mufti Sahib, drawing from Fataawa Bazzaaziyyah, states: *"According to Fataawa Bazzaaziyyah it is permissible to raise one's voice when making zikr just as it is permissible to raise one's voice when calling out the Azaan or when delivering a lecture."*

This statement appears at the end of Bazzaaziyyah's discussion on raising the voice with Thikr. Hence, the Mufti sahib cannot plead unawareness or an oversight in having refrained from presenting the full argument of Bazzaaziyyah. In the interests of objectivity and for those who are desirous of gaining the Haqq, we reproduce the full text of Bazzaaziyyah:
"And it is reported in Fataawa Qaadhi that raising the voice with Thikr is haraam. *(Note: it has not been said 'undesirable' as the venerable Mufti Sahib alleged. Surely, the Mufti Sahib is aware of the difference between haraam and undesirable!)* **And, verily, it has been authentically established from Ibn Mas'ood that he heard of a group who had gathered in the Musjid, and they were audibly reciting Laa-ilaha illallaah and Durood on Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). He then**

went up to them and said: 'We did not practise this during the time of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). I therefore, do not consider you, except as innovators.' He persisted in this averment until he expelled them from the Musjid."

Commenting on this action of the great Sahaabi, the Author says: "If you (O Reader!) say that it is mentioned in Al-Fataawa that *Thikr bil jahr* even in the Musjid will not be prevented to ensure that one does not come within the scope of the aayat of Allah Ta'ala, viz., *'Who is more unjust than the one who prevents from the Musaajid that Allah's Name be recited therein.',* but the action of Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) contradicts your statement, then I say: If expulsion from the Musjid was executed literally, then it is probable on account of their belief that their act was ibaadat, and so that the people be taught that it (their collective Thikr) is bid'ah. A permissible action can become impermissible because of an accretion."

It is noteworthy that the Mufti Sahib has deemed it appropriate to observe total silence regarding Qaadhi Khaan's affirmation of the Hadith of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu). While the Mufti Sahib had painfully, but abortively, struggled to invalidate the authenticity of the Hadith, Qaadhi Khaan affirms its authenticity. And, while the Mufti Sahib presents a weak view of permissibility mentioned in Qaadhi Khaan, he dismisses the very strong view of *hurmat* stated by Qaadhi Khaan, and also supported by the Hadith of Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu).

Furthermore, Bazzaaziyyah does not present the *jahr-e-mufrit* argument to neutralize the action of Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) nor does he deny the authenticity attributed to the Hadith by Qaadhi Khaan. On the contrary, he presents an

interpretation to reconcile Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood's action with the Qur'aanic aayat (mentioned above). The reasons which Bazzaaziyyah attributes for the motivation of Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu), namely, the idea of non-ibaadat being regarded as ibaadat, and the danger of bid'ah in unsubstantiated practices, exist to a far greater degree in the collective public performances of our current age of moral corruption, ignorance and spiritual bankruptcy.

We might just as well add, that there is no need to attempt reconciliation between the action of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) and the Qur'aanic aayat. The exercise of the interpretation is superfluous. This eminent Sahaabi was not acting in any way in conflict with the Qur'aanic aayat. He stated unambiguously that the reason for his action was that this type of collective Thikr performance was not part of Ibaadat during the time of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), and that their deed was bid'ah.

Preventing the perpetration of haraam and bid'ah in the Musjid cannever be equated to preventing people from Thikrullaah in the Musjid.

FATAAWA HINDIYYAH

The venerable Mufti Sahib also tenders Fataawa Hindiyyah in his support. Thus he says:
"In Fataawa Hindiyyah it is stated that there is nothing wrong if a group of people have to collectively and loudly recite Subhaanallah and Laa-ilaha illallah etc. in the presence of a judge. From the above statement we gain proof of the permissibility of loud and collective zikr."

The recitation in front of a judge is indeed an abnormal practice. Ibaadat is not executed in the presence of a judge. There surely must have been some underlying reason for coupling this type of Thikr with the presence of a judge. Anyhow, even if making such Thikr collectively in front of a judge is permissible according to Fataawa Hindiyyah, Imaam Abu Hanifah's Ruling cancels the permissibility.

The Mufti Sahib has also dishonourably concealed the correct text of Fataawa Hindiyyah. On this issue, the following appears in Fataawa Hindiyyah: *"A big concourse has gathered by the Qaadhi. They all together raise their voices with Tasbeeh and Tahleel. There is nothing wrong with this. However,* ***Ikhfa' is afdhal."***

The crowd which has gathered by the Qaadhi, ostensibly for some mundane need, on seeing the judge, spontaneously exclaims: '*Subhaanallaah! Laa ilaha illallaah!* This is not a gathering of Thikr. The people merely exclaimed their happiness at seeing the Qaadhi. If one sees something beautiful, and one exclaims: '*Subhaanallaah!*', it will not be a Thikr session. Similarly, when *'Alhamdulillaah!'* is exclaimed on sneezing, it will not be said that the sneezer is engaging in a Thikr session.

The Mufti Sahib has scraped the bottom of the barrel in his arduous search for 'proofs' for the bid'ah collective loud Thikr public performances.

Furthermore, Fataawa Hindiyyah explicitly refutes the Mufti Sahib's contention of *jahri Thikr* being superior. ***"Ikhfa is afdhal"*** is stated with emphasis in the very same sentence from which the Mufti Sahib has selected the 'Thikr' in front of the Qaadhi.

Again, the Mufti Sahib very conveniently casts a blind eye on the very next sentence which belies his claim of the preferability of loud Thikr over silent Thikr. While the statement selectively extracted from Fataawa Hindiyyah by the venerable Mufti Sahib is not related to a Thikr session, the very next statement which he ignores, is the Fatwa which Fataawa Hindiyyah issues on the issue of loud/silent Thikr. Thus, it is said in Fataawa Hindiyyah: *"And, if they gather for the Thikr of Allah Ta'ala, Tasbeeh and Tahleel, they should recite silently."*

The Mufti Sahib's concealment of the Haqq is lamentable. While he abortively attempts to utilize a kitaab for his bid'ah cause, he ignores or conceals *all* the statements of that kitaab which refute his views.

Another significant fact stemming from the aforegoing fatwa of Fataawa Hindiyyah is that when people gather for Thikrullaah, *jahr* is not a requisite for the validity of a gathering. It is noteworthy that Fataawa Hindiyyah states that when people gather for Thikrullaah, they should recite silently.

Mullah Ali Qaari

Attempting to infuse life into his dead and fallacious arguments in favour of collective loud Thikr performances in the Musaajid, the Mufti Sahib alleges that although Mulla Ali Qaari has mentioned that 'according to some Ulama it is Haraam to raise one's voice when making zikr', he himself has advocated loud Thikr elsewhere in his kitaab.

Mulla Ali Qaari's view cannot override the categoric ruling of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu), nor can it be cited in refutation of the emphatic ruling of Imaam Abu

Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) who has explicitly stated: *"Raising the voice in the Musjid even with Thikr is haraam."*
The quagmire of conflicts and uncertainty in which Mulla Ali Qaari found himself, constrained him to acquit himself with trepidation. Illustrating the uncertainty of Mulla Ali Qaari on this issue, Maulana Abdul Hayy (rahmatullah alayh) states in his *Sabaahatul Fikr:* "Some of his statements in Sharhul Hisnil Haseen incline to permissibility (of Thikr-e-jahr) although some of his statements in other places refute it."

THE INTERPRETATIONS

The first reason for Imaam Maalik's refutation of all kinds of *Thikr bil jahr* practices is: *"The Salf did not practise these acts."* In relation to Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh), the *Salaf* were the Sahaabah and the Taabieen. In this categorical claim, Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) outrightly refutes the validity of even *mutlaq jahr* because it was not the *amal* of the Sahaabah and the Taabieen.

Now when such an august and illustrious personality as Imaam Maalik unequivocally states that the Sahaabah and Taabi-een did not practise *Thikr bil jahr*, then tendering the opinions of Ulama who appeared on the scene 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 centuries after the era of the Sahaabah is improper, and untenable. The opinions and interpretations of such Ulama cannot override the explicit rulings of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen.

The second reason for the prohibition stated by Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) and his Ashaab is: *To close the avenue of bid'ah and to eliminate the source of the energy which fuels bid'ah.* Acts of ibaadat which were not in vogue during the era of the Sahaabah and Taabieen, inevitably culminate in bid'ah sayyiah. The limits of *Ibaahat* (permissibility) are transgressed and the innovated practices are elevated to the status of Sunnah and even Wujoob. Even those authorities who believe in the permissibility of *Thikr bil jahr* concede this fact.

When illustrious Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen of the calibre of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) and Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) had so diligently and forcefully closed the avenue of bid'ah, what constrains the venerable Mufti Sahib to

attempt a forceful opening up of the door of bid'ah with his collective loud public Thikr performances in the Musaajid?

For all these reasons, it is quite obvious that the interpretation proffered by Maulana Abdul Hayy (rahmatullah alayh) is incorrect.

ALLAAMAH SUYUTI (RAHMATULLAH ALAYH)

It is impudence to present the views of Allaamah Suyuti (rahmatullah alayh) in refutation of the verdicts of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen. The Authorities of the Shariah, who are the ultimate limits for the Ilmi trajectories of the Muqallideen Ulama and Fuqaha are the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen. Allaamah Suyuti (rahmatullah alayh), nine centuries later, did not possess the entitlement to set aside the verdicts of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen, override them and present Ahaadith in refutation of their rulings. No one, until the Day of Qiyaamah, will ever possess such a licence regardless of how lofty a status he may acquire in Ilm and Taqwa.

The personal opinion and views of Allaamah Suyuti (rahmatullah alayh) are of no interest nor of any substance if these are in conflict with the verdicts of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen. The votaries of the bid'ah collective loud Thikr performances in the Musaajid have no respect and regard for even the explicit Shar'i verdicts of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen whose Math-hab they ostensibly purport to follow. They should not expect us to be subordinate to the opinions of Ulama who appeared many centuries after the era of the *Khairul Quroon*, when such opinions take no cognizance of the rulings of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen.

MA-AARIFUL QUR'AAN

The venerable Mufti Sahib avers: *"In Ma'aariful Qur'an this verse is explained as follows: The benefit of appointing Hazrat Haroon (Alaihis Salaam) as a minister and partner in the prophethood of Hazrat Musa (Alaihis Salaam) was so that they could collectively remember Allah."*

The Mufti Sahib has truly descended to an extremely low and baseless level in scrounging for 'proofs' to justify the bid'ah collective Thikr performances. What relationship does the appointment of Nabi Haroon (alayhis salaam) as a Nabi subordinate to Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam) have with the bid'ah collective loud Thikr performances in public venues? Did Hadhrat Musaa (alayhis salaam) and Hadhrat Haroon (alayhis salaam) execute any Thikr performance for the gallery? Did they engage in the type of bid'ah enactment which the Mufti Sahib is promoting? This 'argument; is another example of the drivel type of 'proof' which clutters the discussion of the Mufti Sahib.

The Mufti Sahib has dug out from Ma-aariful Qur'aan this absurd 'proof' for his public Thikr programmes despite there being nothing in common to justify a comparion, while he conveniently ignores Ma-aariful Qur'aan's direct reference to *Thikr bil jahr* and the like. Regarding loud Thikr, Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi; (rahmatullah alayh) says in his Ma-aariful Qur'aan: *"With regard to the Mashaaikh-e-Chisht among the noble Sufiya who instruct the Mubtadi (beginner) with Thikr-e-jahr, it is by way of ilaaj (treatment), taking into consideration his condition, so that indolence and indifference (ghaflat) would dissipate with the jahr, and an affinity with Thikrullah develops in his heart. In reality, even according to them Chishti Mashaaikh), jahr in Thikr is* ***not desirable*** *despite it being permissible. Furthermore, its permissibility in terms of the Hadith is conditional with absence of riya."*

True to form, the venerable Mufti Sahib overlooked this tafseer since it does not serve his collective loud Thikr agenda.

CASES OF THE CONTENDERS

In the mas'alah of *Thikr Bil Jahr* there are three contenders.

* The first group contents that as long as the Thikr is not with *jahr-e-mufrit* (screaming/shouting) all forms of loud Thikr, whether individual or collective, private or public, substantiated by the Sunnah or unsubstantiated, are permissible.
* *Thikr bil jahr* is *afdhal* (superior) and more beneficial than *Thikr-e-Khafi.*
* The second group contends that both *Thikr bil jahr* provided it is not *jahr-e-mufrit* and *Thikr-e-Khafi* are permissible.
* *Thikr-e-Khafi is afdhal.*
* The third group contends that *Thikr-e-Jahr* in general *(alal itlaaq)* is prohibited except such practices of *jahr* explicitly ordered by the Shariah, e.g. Athaan, Iqaamah, Talbiyah, Takbeer-e-Tashreeq and Khutbah.

Almost the entire case of group one is erroneous. They have no case in the Shariah except in their contention of *jahr ghair mufrit* for the individual in privacy. Everything else besides this exception is baseless.

This group relies on the personal opinions of Ulama who appeared many centuries after the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen, and on khaanqah practices which on the admission of the khaanqah Mashaaikh are temporary remedial measures to treat spiritual ailments. They ignore the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen, override the rulings of the Fuqaha-e-Mutaqaddimeen and believe themselves to be qualified in 'ijtihaad'. Hence, they resort to

the Ahaadith, interpreting and misinterpreting the narrations to hammer out a basis for their bid'ah collective loud Thikr performances.

It is this group which opens the avenue for bid'ah sayyiah. It is this group which operates in the shadows of those who had joined the Khawaarij sect in the rebellion against the Sahaabah. It is this group whose spiritual fathers,. Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) had branded *'Mubtadieen'* and had them expelled from the Musjid. They have no valid *daleel* for their bid'ah practices.

The second group has a valid case and strong *dalaa-il* to substantiate its claim. The only difference it has with the third group, is that the question of *afdhaliyyat* (superiority/ of greater merit) does not develop in the view of the third group because this latter group proscribes *Thikr Bil Jahr entoto* except where the Shariah has explicitly issued its decree.

The third group also has strong *dalaa-il* to validate its claim, but it recognizes no *afdhaliyyat* in view of the belief that *jahr alal itlaaq* is forbidden. There is therefore no other category of Thikr which could be the subject of comparison to produce the superiority of one kind. Although this group accepts the validity of *jahr* for the explicit Shar'i exceptions such as Athaan and Talbiyah, they have confined the exceptions to an extremely narrow area. The exceptions are only Athaan, Iqaamah, Talbiyah, Qiraa't in the Jahri Salaat, Takbeer Tashreeq, Khutbah and any other explicit exception made by the Shariah.

These exceptions are based on Imaam Abu Hanifah's principle of *Daleel-e-Mukhassis* which shall soon be explained, Insha'Allah. The error of this group is in the misconception that

the *Daleel-e-Mukhassis* applies to only the limited few explicit Shar'i exceptions whereas there is wide scope for the application of the principle of *Daleel-e-Mukhassis*. And Allah knows best.

THE VIEW OF THE SECOND GROUP

The view of the second group is, in our opinion, the path of rectitude. Their *dalaa-il* are the strongest, rational and supported by the Qur'aan and Sunnah. The position of this group is recapped as follows:

(1) The Qur'aanic verse which mentions *'less than jahr"*, the Hadith, *"Have mercy on your souls."*, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) ordering Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) to lower his voice while making Tilaawat, and similar other Ahaadith explicitly prohibit *jahr-e-mufrit.*

(2) The fact that the aforementioned *Nusoos* were directed at *jahr-e-mufrit* is ample evidence for the permissibility of *jahr ghair mufrit.* While prohibiting excessive loudness, moderate audibility was clearly permitted. Thus, the two forms of Thikr are confirmed as permissible – *Thikr-e-Jahr ghair mufrit* and *Thikr-e-Khafi*.

(3) The Qur'aanic verses commanding humility and silence when making Thikr and the Hadith narrations explicitly stating the superiority of silent Thikr (these have already been discussed) validate the contention of the *afdhaliyyat* of *Thikr-e-Khafi.*

DALEEL MUKHASSIS

This is the principle of exclusion from a whole. The Shariah issues its decree *(Hukm)* to apply to all situations for example. However, certain members or acts which constitute part of the whole are excluded from the effect of the decree. Such exclusion from the decree of the Shariah is valid and permissible only if the Shariah itself is the determinant *(Daleel-e-Mukhassis).*

For example: Qur'baani of sheep and goats is valid and permissible. All goats and sheep come within the scope of this decree. However, the Shariah itself has excluded goats and sheep whose tails are cut. Qur'baani of such tailless animals is not permissible or valid. The exclusion is based on a Shar'i decree, not on our rationality.

Similarly, according to Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) the Shariah orders the Takbeer to be recited audibly from Fajr on the Day of Arafah until Asr on the Day of Nahr (10th). Thereafter, reciting it audibly is not permissible. Explaining the operation of this principle, Allaamah Kaasaani (rahmatullah alayh) states in his *Badaaius Sanaa':*

"According to Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) raising the voice with Takbeer is primarily bid'ah because the Sunnah in Athkaar is Khafi (reciting inaudibly) by virtue of the Qaul of Allah Ta'ala: *'Call unto your Rabb with humility and in silence',* and because Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: *"The best Dua is the silent Dua.'* Thus, this principle (of silent Thikr being the decree and loud Thikr being bid'ah) shall not be discarded except when there is a *Daleel-e-Mukhassis.* There exists such a *Daleel* regarding (audible recitation of)

Takbeer from the Day of Arafah until Asr Salaat on the Day of Nahr. That *Daleel* is Allah's Qaul (the relevant Qur'aanic verse)……… However, with regard to the days after the Day of Nahr, there exists no *Daleel-e-Mukhassis* in view of the differences of the Sahaabah, and the wavering of the Takbeer (i.e. reciting it audibly or inaudibly) between Sunnah and Bid'ah. Thus developed the doubt in the *Daleel-e-Mukhassis*. Therefore, *amal* shall not be abandoned on the *umoom* (general meaning) of the aayat: *'Call your Rabb with humility and in silence.'*. It is, therefore, clear that *ihtiyaat* (the precautionary measure) is in abandoning (the loud recitation of Takbeer after the Day of Nahr). *Ihtiyaat* is not in practising on it because, verily, discarding a Sunnah is better than practising on a bid'ah."

Ibnul Humaam (rahmatullah alayh) states in *Fathul Qadeer:* "The principle in Athkaar is Ikhfa' and Jahr is bid'ah. When there is a conflict between the two (types of narration pertaining to the Days of the Takbeeer), then the lesser number will be preferred (and this is the practice of Imaam Abu Hanifah – rahmatullah alayh – which Ibnul Humaam has endorsed by rejecting the fatwa issued on the view of Saahibain)."

For the comprehension of readers, it is necessary to explain the view of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) on this issue. According to him, it is permissible to recite the Takbeer aloud after every fardh Salaat only from Fajr of the Day of Arafah until after Asr on the Day of Nahr which is the next day. In this mas'alah, Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) adopted the practice of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood. Our concern here is not to promote this particular practice of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) in view of the fact that the verdict of the

Hanafi Math-hab on this issue is not on the view of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh).

The purpose of citing this example is only to explain the application of the Principe of *Daleel-e-Mukhassis.* Based on the same principle of *Khafi* being the primary decree in Athkaar, the Takbeer is recited silently along the route to the Musallaa on Eidul Fitr. There is no *Mukhassis* to exclude it from this universal principle.

All episodes of *Thikr bil jahr* by individual Sahaabah, which Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) did not expressly command, but nevertheless condoned, come within the purview of the principle of *Daleel-e-Mukhassis.* Thus, in view of the fact that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had permitted individual Sahaabah to engage in *Thikr-e-jahr,* it has to be accepted that such permission is the *Daleel-e-Mukhassis* for excluding individual practices of *Thikr-e-jahr* conducted in solitude, from the primary principle pertaining to *Ikhfa* in Thikr.

There are no cases of collective loud Thikr gatherings mentioned explicitly in the Ahaadith. From certain Ahaadith, inferences have been drawn. But inference does not create certitude. The *Shakk* (doubt) of error remains in an inference which is not the product of *Wahi.* On the contrary, it is the effect of the human mind in which there is no *Qat'iyyat* (Absolute Certitude). Hence, the principle of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) will apply, namely: *"When a practice wavers between Sunnah and Bid'ah, the Sunnah will be discarded."* In such cases of uncertainty and conflicting views and inferences, the demand of the Shariah is to adopt *Ihtiyaat* which is in abandoning the imagined Sunnah/Mustahab to avoid committing a bid'ah.

Furthermore, there is the explicit declaration of Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) that such collective practices in the Musaajid were not practised by the Sahaabah and the Taabi-een. Added to this, is the principle of *Sadd-e-Tharaai'* (Closing the avenues for corruption) of Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) and of the Fuqaha of all the Math-habs.

While there is *Daleel-e-Mukhassis* for *Thikr-e-jahr* practised by individuals in solitude, there is no such *Daleel* for the type of collective loud Thikr public performances advocated by the venerable Mufti Sahib. Apart from there being no *Daleel-e-Mukhassis* to exclude the public displays from the prohibition stated in the primary principle, there is explicit prohibition of such performances. This prohibition is the action of castigation and expulsion of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu).

Complementing this *explicit prohibition,* are the many instances of prohibition by the Sahaabah of acts of 'ibaadat' which did not conform to the methods of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and which were criticized by the Sahaabah on the basis of the 'principle' of Rasulullah's Abstention, e.g. Nafl Salaat in the Eidgah, addition of Durood to the sneeze-dua, audible Tasmiah, audible Takbeer, etc.

All unbiased readers whose quest is the truth will understand from our discussion that the venerable Mufti Sahib has absolutely no case and no proof for bid'ah collective loud Thikr performances in the Musaajid. Those indulging in these unsubstantiated practices are opening up a wide avenue for entrenching bid'ah – Bareilwi type bid'ah sayyiah. May Allah Ta'ala bestow good hidaayat to all those innocently involved in furthering the plot of Shaitaan. *Bid'ah* is a dangerous trap

which Shaitaan engineers with a subtlety which even Ulama fail to detect.

"And upon us is only to deliver the clear Message."
(Qur'aan)

CONSPECTUS OF THE DALAA-IL

The reader may feel lost and confused with the numerous arguments and counter-arguments scattered throughout this treatise. It is therefore prudent to compile in summary form all the *dalaa-il* (proofs) which substantiate the Shariah's *Ijmaa'* (Consensus) on the *afdhaliyyat* (superiority) of *Thikr-e-Khafi* (Silent Thikr).

These *dalaa-il* will also confirm the secondary nature of *Thikr-e-Jahr* (Audible Thikr), as well as the impermissibility of loud Thikr on certain occasions and instances.

(1) "It is Makrooh to make dua during the month of Ramadhaan when making Khatam of the Qur'aan, as well as when a group makes khatam of the Qur'aan (i.e. at any other time). Faqeeh Abul Qaasim As-Sifaar (rahmatullah alayh) said: "If it was not for the fear that the people of this city would say: *'He prevents us from dua',* then most assuredly, I would have prevented them from it."

(Al-Muheetul Burhaani)

The reference is to congregational dua after khatam of the Qur'aan Majeed has been made.

Al-Muheetul Burhaani is a voluminous kitaab (25 Volumes) occupying a very lofty pedestal in Hanafi Fiqh. It was compiled by the fifth century Imaam Burhaanuddeen Abil Ma-aali Mahmood (rahmatullah alay). It is an elevated compilation consisting of the Masaa-il and their Dalaa-il of the Fuqaha-e-Mutaqaddimeen such as Imaam Abu Hanifah, Imaam Abu Yusuf, Imaam Muhammad (rahmatullah alayhim) and others.

While the Compiler is of the fifth Islamic century, the Masaa-il are those of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen and Fuqaha-e-Mutaqaddimeen of the first Islamic century. Nothing can supersede the Rulings of these Ulama belonging to the highest echelon of Fuqaha after the Sahaabah.

(2) "If the *Muthakkir* (the lecturer) on the mimbar recites *Ma'thoor (Masnoon)* duas, (audibly) and the people follow him in reciting these (Masnoon) duas, then if the purpose is to teach them (how to recite the duas), there is nothing wrong. However, if the purpose is not for the ta'leem of the people, then it is Makrooh, for verily, doing so is bid'ah." (Al-Muheetul Burhaani)
The khutbah here does not refer to the Jumuah Khutbah. It refers to a lecture/bayaan.

(3) "Imaam Muhammad (rahmatullah alayh) narrated in *As-Siyarul Kabeer* from Imaam Hasan (rahmatullah alayh) that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) abhorred (regarded as Makrooh) raising the voice at the time of reciting the Qur'aan and at the time of the Janaazah.

Qais Ibn Ubaadah narrates that Ubaadah said: 'Verily, the Ashaab of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) detested (regarded as Makrooh) raising the voice by the Janaa-iz and at the time of Thikr.' In the Hadith of Hasan, instead of Thikr, the word, qiraa't of the Qur'aan is used. There is no conflict between the two because, verily, the term *Thikr* includes dua, tasbeeh, tahleel, wa'z and qiraa't of the Qur'aan. In fact, qiraa't of the Qur'aan is the noblest of Athkaar. Allah Ta'ala says: 'And, the Thikr of Allah is the Greatest.' " (Al-Muheetul Burhaani)

(4) "Verily, the Sunnah in duas is *Ikhfa' "*. (Al-Muheetul Burhaani)

(5) "If the meaning of raising the voice at the time of Thikr means dua, then most certainly is Makrooh, for verily, the *Asal* in duas is *Ikhfa',* and also because in it (audibility) is *riya* (show/ostentation). Precisely for this is it Makrooh to raise the voice with tasbeeh and tahleel."

And, if the meaning of the word *Thikr* (in this context) is *wa'z* (lecture), then it does not mean the raising of the voice of the waa-iz (lecturer). It will mean the raising of voices by the audience with tahleel, tasbeeh and durood when the lecturer mentions the name of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Verily, it has been authentically narrated that it was reported to Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) that a group of people had gathered in the Musjid, and they were reciting tahleel and durood on Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) while raising their voices. Then Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) went up to them and said: *"We did not practise this during the time of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). I deem you to be mubtadieen (innovators).'* He continued repeating this until he expelled them from the Musjid."

And if the meaning of the word, *Thikr* (in this context) is reciting the Qur'aan, then verily, it is Makrooh to raise the voice with qiraa't." (Al-Muheetul Burhaani)

(6) "*Jahr* with Takbeer is known by (the Nass of) the Shariah which is in conflict with the primary principle viz. *'Verily, the Asal in athkaar and ad-iyyah (duas) is Ikhfa'.*

(7) "It is narrated from Ash-Shaikh Imaam Faqeeh Abi Ja'far (rahmatullah alayh): 'I heard that verily our (i.e. the Ahnaaf)

Mashaaikh regarded Takbeer Tashreeq (i.e. its recitation audibly) in the market-places bid'ah. And Allah Subhaanahu wa Ta'ala knows best."

(Al-Burhaanul Muheet)

(8) Allaamah Kaasaani (rahmatullah alayh) records in his *Badaaius Sanaai':* "According to Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh), raising the voice with takbeer is bid'ah, for verily it is a Thikr, and the primary principle in athkaar is Ikhfa' by virtue of Allah's qaul: *"Call unto your Rabb with humility and in silence",* and by virtue of the qaul of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam): *"The best dua is the silent dua."*

Allaamah Alaauddeen Abu Bakr bin Mas'ood Kaasaani (rahmatullah alayh) was a Faqeeh of the fifth Islamic century.

(8) "Verily, *jahr* with takbeer is bid'ah." (Hidaayah)

(9) "Ibn Humaam said: 'The *Asal* in Athkaar is *Ikhfa'* and *jahr* is bid'ah." (Fathul Qadeer)

(10) "Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) said: *'Raising the voice with Thikr is bid'ah because it is in conflict with the qaul of Allah Ta'ala, viz., 'Make the Thikr of your Rabb in your heart with humility and silence, and with a voice less than jahr."* (Al-Khulaasah)

(11) "The takbeer shall not be recited audibly. The reason for this being: *"Verily, the Asal in Thikr is Ikhfa.', on the basis of the qaul of Allah Ta'ala, viz., 'Call unto your Rabb with humility and in silence', and because of the qaul of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam): 'The best Thikr is Thikr-e-Khafi.'..........Verily jahr is in conflict with the Asal (Principle of Imaam Abu Hanifah)." (Ghaayatul Bayaan)*

(12) "Raising the voice with Thikr is haraam. Verily, it has been authentically reported that Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) heard that a group of people had gathered in the Musjid…….*(the same narration of innovators and their expulsion)."* (Fataawa Qaadhi Khaan)

(13) "*Jahr* with takbeer is bid'ah at all times except on occasions of exceptions (made by the Shariah). And Qaadhi Khaan has categorically declared *jahr* with takbeer to be Makrooh, and the Author of Al-Musaffa has concurred (with him)." (Al-Bahrur Raai-q)

(14) "Tabari said: 'In it (the Hadith) is the Karaahat of raising the voice with Thikr and dua. And this is what the generality of the Sahaabah and Taabieen say.' " (Irshaadus Saari of Qustulaani)

(15) "And according to what has been reported by As-Suyuti, Ibn Majah and Nisaai' have also narrated this. This Hadith indicates that it is Makrooh to raise the voice with Thikr. Now even if it is not haraam, then at least it will not be less than Makrooh." (Sabaahatul Fikr)

(16) "Imaam Maalik and his Ashaab said that all these acts (of jahr and congregation in the Musjid) are Makrooh because the Salaf (Sahaabah and Taabieen) did not practise these acts. (These practices are also Makrooh) so that the avenue and means for bid'ah remains closed to ensure that there be no excess in the Deen, and abandonment of the clear Haqq. Verily, that which Imaam Maalik and his companions had feared has assumed reality in our time." (Sabaahatul Fikr)

(17) "In this Hadith is the indication for the permissibility of *jahr without doubt although Ikhfa' is afdhal."* – Shaikh Dahlawi in Sharhul Mishkaat. (Sabaahatul Fikr)

(18) "There is no doubt in the fact that *Sirr* (silence) is superior (afdhal) to jahr…….' The Mustahab according to us (the Ahnaaf) is silence in Athkaar." – An-Nihaayah (Sabaahatul Fikr)

(19) "The Hadith: *"The best Thikr is Khafi (silent Thikr)",* indicates the afdhaliyyat of silent Thikr, and there is no dispute in this fact." (Sabaahatul Fikr)

(20) "When the people recite takbeer (audibly) after Salaat, verily, it is Makrooh and bid'ah. When they recite takbeer (audibly) in the Musaajid of the Ribaat when there is no fear (of the enemy), then it is Makrooh." (Fataawa Hindiyyah)

(21) Qur'aanic recitation is Mustahab only if one person recites after another person has recited, not collectively as the Egyptians and Syrians have innovated. (One person should recite while the others should listen. Then another person should recite, and the others should listen.). Verily, Ibnudh Dhiyaa' from our Ulama has explicitly said that raising the voice in the Musjid even with Thikr is haraam." (Irshaadus Saari – Manaasik Mulla Ali Qaari)

(22) The aayat of the Qur'aan (in Surah A'raaf) is Nass for Ikhfa' being Mustahab. (Jaami' Li Ahkaamil Qur'aan of Qurtibi)

(23) Silent Dua is afdhal. Thikr-e-Khafi is afdhal. (Ma-aariful Qur'aan)

(24) Thikr jahr is permissible, but Thikr Khafi is Aula. (Kifaayatul Mufti)

(25) Ikhfa' in Dua is preferable (Mustahab).(Al-Mabsoot)

(26) "It has been deducted on the basis of this aayat that Ikhfa' in Thikr is afdhal. The Hadith narrated by Imaam Ahmad supports this. (Ruhul Ma-aani)

All Authorities of the Shariah from the time of the Sahaabah, are unanimous in having proclaimed the *afdhaliyyat* (superiority and preferability) of *Thikr-e-Khafi.*

From the *Dalaa-il* on the issue being disputed, the following are the conclusions:

(a) The ruling pertaining to *jahr ghair mufrit* (moderate audibility – not shouting and screaming) varies between haraam and mubah (permissible). Some authorities say that it is haraam; others say, bid'ah; some say, Makrooh; some say permissible.

(b) According to the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen there appears to be consensus on haraam and bid'ah except where the Shariah has made exceptions. The exceptions are made by the determinant termed *Daleel Mukhassis.* Only Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had the right to make such exceptions, hence *Thikr bil jahr* individually in privacy is permissible.

(c) The plethora of differences which has created a quagmire in which many Ulama flounder, unable to arrive at a conclusion, exist among the Ulama who came many centuries after the age of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen. The unequivocal and

unanimous view of *hurmat* (prohibition) has cast the later Ulama into a quandary. In the endeavour to be extricated from the quagmire, a variety of interpretations has been produced. Most, if not all, of these interpretations only serve to complicate the quagmire.

Most of the interpretations are untenable, both rationally and irrationally *(Aqlan wa Naqlan).* Some interpretations, e.g. the assertion that Imaam Abu Hanifah's principle refers to *jahr-e-mufrit,* are absolute drivel irrespective of who fabricated it.

(d) There exists an incontrovertible consensus *(Ijma')* on the *afdhaliyyat* (superiority) of *Thikr-e-Khafi.* Whoever has ventured a contrary opinion has failed to crack or dent the Consensus. The contrary opinion of the stragglers is pure opinion devoid of Shar'i substance.

(e) All the Sufi Mashaaikh of the Four Silsilahs, despite their remedial and perculiar practices of jahr in their khaanqahs, are unanimous in upholding the *afdhaliyyat of Jahr-e-Khafi.*

(e) The view of *afdhaliyyat* of *Thikr-e-Jahri* propounded by Mufti Radhaaul haq Sahib is a palpable fallacy, and his view of the permissibility of collective loud Thikr performances in the Musaajid is a greater fallacy and in diametric contradiction of *all* the *Dalaa-il* of the Shariah. Such public performances are **bid'ah** and **haraam**.

THE SHAAFI' MATH-HAB

Regardless of the considerable flailing of their arguments by the collective loud Thikr group, the official and authoritative

view of the Shaafi' Math-hab is on the *Istihbaab* and *Afdhaliyyat* of *Thikr-e-Khafi*.

"The Jamhoor Hanafi and Shaafi' Fuqaha have explicitly stated that *jahr with Thikr* is not Sunnat after Salaat. On the contrary, *Sirr* is. It is mentioned in Nisaabul Ihtisaab: 'If they recite takbeer aloud after Salaat, it is Makrooh, for verily it is bid'ah except on the occasion of Nahr and the Days of Tashreeq.'

Ibn Bittaal and others have narrated that the Authorities of the (Four) Math-habs are unanimous that it is not Mustahab to raise the voice with Thikr. Imaam Shaafi' has interpreted this Hadith (regarding jahr) to mean that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had made jahr for a short while. He did not make jahr permanently." (Sharhul Muslim, Ihkaamul Ahkaam, Sabaahatul Fikr, etc.)

NOTE

Some Ulama have presented the view of *Thikr-e-jahr* being preferable in some instances. It should be noted that this preferability is confined to Thikr made in solitude. It is not related to Thikr in public places such as Musaajid. A person in the solitude of his home or in the wilderness is permitted to engage in *Thikr-e-jahr* which is not inordinately loud. This 'preferability' does not apply to Thikr made in the Musjid or anywhere in the public. The Khaanqah is in the category of a private venue.

Thikr-e-Khafi is mandatory in public places, hence Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) and the Fuqaha-e-Mutaqaddimeen explicitly and emphatically ruled:

"Raising the voice in the Musjid is haraam even if it be With Thikr."

SUMMARY

For easy grasping and comprehension of readers, it is best that we summarize the salient features of this treatise.

(1) The venerable Mufti Radhaaul Haq Sahib, in his booklet, embarked on the exercise of proving the validity, permissibility and superiority of the *Ijtimaai'* (Congregational) loud Thikr practices performed in the Musaajid. This is bid'ah which is on the rise as a direct consequence of the practices of members of even the Deobandi School.

(2) In the endeavour to validate the public bid'ah performances, the Mufti Sahib was constrained to unnecessarily establish a basis for the permissibility of loud Thikr because such Thikr constitutes an integral ingredient of the public performances. Since there is hardly any opposition to *Thikr bil jahr per se,* the laborious efforts of the Mufti Sahib in his booklet are really superfluous and redundant.

(3) In his bid to prepare a basis for the public performances, the Mufti Sahib lost his bearings and irrationally and emotionally struggled to prove that loud Thikr is in fact superior and better than *Thikr-e-Khafi*. His opinion is in conflict with all the *Dalaa-il* of the Shariah.

(4) The Mufti Sahib has exceeded the bounds of propriety in scholary dissertation and presentation of rational and Shar'i argument, by ignoring the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen and the sacred Shackles of Taqleed which he purports to be donning. He has attempted to disprove the clear-cut and emphatic rulings of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen by looking over their shoulders, digging out Ahaadith and presenting the interpretations of

Ulama who appeared centuries – 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 centuries after the era of the Sahaabah and Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen. While these Ulama proffer a variety of interpretations, they generally are unanimous in the view that *Thikr-e-khafi* is fundamentally *afdhal.*

(5) The venerable Mufti Sahib has grievously erred in relying for 'proof' on the views of the centuries later Mufassireen and the Khaanqah practices. But none of these has any standing in the area of *Shar'i Dalaail.*

(6) It has been shown beyond any doubt in this treatise that the collective loud Thikr programmes conducted in the Musaajid are bid'ah, hence not permissible to participate in.

(7) The final word for the Muqallid, be he a Mufti A'zam or an Allaamatud Dahr or a Bahrul Uloom, or a Qutbuz Zamaan or a Saahib-e-Kashf wa Ilhaam, is the ruling of his Math-hab. The rulings of the Math-hab are not inferred and acquired from the practices of the Sufis in their Khaanqahs nor from the interpretations of centuries later Mufassireen, nor from the Muhadditheen such as Imaam Bukhaari, Imaam Muslim and others , all of whom have no status in relation to the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen who were the highest class of Fuqaha after the Sahaabah. They occupied the loftiest stations in the firmament of *Ilm-e-Wahi* (the Knowledge of Revelation). Lamentably, the venerable Mufti Sahib had not deemed it appropriate to submit to these illustrious Souls.

His attitude of elevating the Mufassireen and the Khanqah practices and fixing these as his primary basis is deplorably inconsistent with the Mantle of Ilm.

CONCLUSION

- *Thikr bil jahr* (audible Thikr) in solitude and privacy is permissible.
- *Thikr bil jahr-e-mufrit* (shouting and screaming) even in solitude is not permissible'
- *Thikr-e-Khafi* (inaudible Thikr) is superior and better than audible Thikr.
- *Ijtimaa'i (congregational) Thikr* in the Musaajid is bid'ah, hence not permissible.

THIKRULLAAH – THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

RASULULLAH (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) SAID:

The era in between birth and death, is one lengthy duration of Thikrullaah, that is, if he understands that he is a Mu'min. Hence, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: *"Every person who is obedient to Allah is a Thaakir."*

MASNOON ATHKAAR

Durood Shareef should be recited daily as much as one wishes. It takes only six minutes to recite Durood Shareef 100 times.

BID'AH IS A CONTAGIOUS MALADY

Public Participation of Women

The congregational loud bid'ah thikr of the males in the nearby venue is relayed to the female crowd by an intercom-system. Thus, the ladies, who are naturally stupid and dim in their brains, sway in 'ecstasy', labouring under the impression that their souls are soaring into hitherto unknown spiritual realms of elevation.

The wailing and crying of the sheikh over the loudspeaker system while making his dua, are deceptions to impress the crowds.

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that he had not left behind him a greater fitnah for men than women.. In every era the true Mashaaikh of Tasawwuf have always warned their compatriots to beware of association with females. Among the snares of *Talbees-e-Iblees* the most potent for ensnaring the Ulama and Sufiyya are the traps of females and young lads. Hakimul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali (rahmatullah alayh) narrated that Hadhrat Yusuf Bin Husain (rahmatullah alayh) said: *"I have seen the calamities befalling the Sufiya who are in association with lads, companionship with aliens and showing tenderness towards women."*